

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE



September 1st, 1933.

VOLUME X

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL No 17

TEN CENTS
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OVERLEAF

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Number 17

Published fortnightly in Russian, German,
French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

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THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

By V. KNORIN.

THE Bolshevik Party has been in existence for thirty years. For thirty years the Bolshevik Party has been fighting for the leadership of the mass proletarian movement, for the introduction of consciousness into the spontaneous movement of the working masses, for the directing of all the forces of the proletarian class struggle to one aim—towards establishing and consolidating proletarian dictatorship. Proletarian dictatorship has been in existence for fifteen years, setting the world an example of how the toiling masses can free themselves from their oppressors. The Communist International, the international party of the proletariat, has been in existence for almost fifteen years; it was built up on the basis of Leninist doctrines, on the pattern of, and resembling, the Bolshevik Party; directing the movement of the working masses of capitalist countries to proletarian revolution; fighting for proletarian dictatorship throughout the world. There stand before us four historic dates of world importance: the creation of the Bolshevik Party, the October victory, the creation of the Communist International, the victory of the first Five-Year Plan.

The basis and the beginning of this splendid development was the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903.

The mighty world historic importance of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. consists in the fact that Bolshevism was established once and for all as an independent current of political thought; the fact that, at this congress, the beginning was made of the existence of the Bolshevik Party, the party of a new type, the party of proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship. The urgent necessity for creating a party of this kind arose out of the whole international situation, and the situation in Russia, out of the fact that the period of calm had come to an end, and there was approaching a new period of revolutionary storms, the starting point of which was to be Russia.

"History has now confronted us with an immediate task, which is *more revolutionary than all the immediate tasks* that confront the proletariat of any other country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, places the Russian proletariat in the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat.

We shall have the right to count upon acquiring the honourable title . . ." (Lenin, "What is to be done," p. 30.)

In order to solve this most revolutionary task of all, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, took as their starting point the theory, tactics and strategy which assured them victory. This is the theory, the tactics and strategy of Marxism.

Bolshevism grew on the most solid base of this Marxist theory, giving Lenin the key to an understanding of the fact that only a strictly centralised and purposeful Marxist party of revolutionaries can assure the hegemony of the proletariat in the ensuing bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia; the victory of the armed uprising; the development of this bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution; the winning of State power by the proletariat, and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. The Bolsheviks, who had stood by Marxism under the yoke of "unprecedented barbarous and reactionary Tsarism," had learned that "a Marxist is he alone who develops recognition of the struggle of classes to a recognition of proletarian dictatorship" (Lenin). Therefore, the history of Bolshevism is the history of an unbroken, stubborn and difficult fight for the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, which constitutes the embryo and the transition to proletarian dictatorship, for the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, for its consolidation and victory, for the building on its basis of the classless socialist society.

To ensure success in this struggle, Lenin created a solid, centralised, united party of revolutionaries, who knew no wavering from the straight road, and were able to fight for these aims. To ensure success in this struggle, the Bolsheviks, headed by Stalin, are to-day fighting for purity, solidarity and unity in its ranks. For—

"proletarian dictatorship is the severest, the sharpest, the most merciless war against a more mighty enemy, against the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is ten times stronger because it has been overthrown (at least in one country), and whose might lies not only in the strength and stability of international bourgeois connections, but also in the force of habit, in the strength of small production" (Lenin).

The Bolshevik Party, created by Lenin at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., became a magnificent militant organisation which was able

to direct the masses; it forged for itself a sharp, ideological and political weapon for coming battles—it had not to change its road, it had not to re-arm itself.

"What we need now is a strong and mighty proletarian dictatorship to smash to atoms the last remains of the dying classes, and to crush their thieving intrigues" (Stalin).

The stable basis of the theory of Marxism and Leninism, proletarian dictatorship and the strictly centralised party of revolutionary communists which guaranteed the victory of the armed uprising, the establishment, maintenance and victory of proletarian dictatorship, the fulfilment of the mighty plan of socialist industrialisation and collectivisation in the first Five-Year Plan—these are the foundations of Bolshevism as they established themselves in 1903 at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., and exist to this day; these are the foundations of the new party, which established itself thirty years ago under the guidance of Lenin and met with decisive successes over the Russian bourgeoisie, under the guidance of Stalin gained a decisive victory in the building of socialism, under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin, became a living example for the revolutionary proletarians and oppressed nations of the whole world.

* * *

The Bolshevik Party established itself, and was created in the struggle against the organisational principles of the parties of the Second International. Leninism is the continuation and development of Marxism, it is Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions; and it was established and created in the struggle against the opportunism of the Second International, and deviations from the general line in its own party. The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was the first powerful blow, the first stroke against the Second International in the organisational and political sphere, delivered by Lenin.

By the time of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903, the Second International had already become the kingdom of the undivided rule of opportunism. The leaders of the Second International had already thrown overboard the basis of Marxism, namely proletarian dictatorship. The social-democratic party was becoming more and more an apparatus for parliamentary elections. The doctrine of the need for, and inevitability of, the victory of socialism, was more and more amounting to fatalistic results of the dialectic development of society, the forward march of which was supposed to be assured by the struggle for political democracy.

The legal Marxists in the middle of the nineties in Russia were merely the more advanced repre-

sentatives of those on the international arena who were besmirching Marxism. "Marxism, as they interpreted it, amounted, one might say, to a doctrine of how, under the capitalist system, individual ownership based on the labour of a property-holder passes through its dialectic development, and how it becomes converted into its opposite, and then is socialised. And they suppose quite seriously that all the content of Marxism is in this 'scheme,' and overlook the peculiarities of its sociological method, overlook the doctrine of the class struggle, overlook the direct purpose of investigation, i.e., to reveal all the forms of antagonism and exploitation, in order to help the proletariat to get rid of them" (Lenin, "Who are the Friends of the People?").

At that time, of course, the Second International still recognised the class struggle, and the necessity for the proletariat to struggle to win political power. Bebel, a few weeks after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., in September, 1903, at the Dresden Party Congress, was still making loud speeches against Bernstein and the revisionists, but resistance to the offensive of the revisionists was getting weaker and weaker. The Party Congresses in Breslau in 1895, in Stuttgart in 1898, in Hanover in 1899, and in Dresden in 1903, were still against revisionism and "were conquering" revisionism, but the whole meaning of the existence of the German social-democratic party, the content of its work and the struggle was being lowered more and more by the growth of the influence of opportunist theories, and a conciliatory attitude to revisionism.

The strivings of the Rights to convert this mass proletarian party into a party of the proletariat and petty-bourgeoisie, and a weapon exclusively for parliamentary struggle, had most decidedly got the upper hand towards the end of the nineties. The resistance to Bernsteinism had already become noticeably weaker. The orthodox ones, who had never been consistent Marxists, were more and more becoming centrists, were more and more adapting themselves to collaboration with open opportunists, until at length, after the swan song of Bebel at the Dresden Party Congress, the new relation of groupings inside German social-democracy was established whereby the leadership was formally centrist, but in actual fact was a Right leadership, because "centrism is the ideology of adaptation, the ideology of subjection of proletarian interests to the interests of the petty bourgeoisie within the composition of one common party" (Stalin).

The "Economists" were the expression of German Bernsteinism and French Millerandism in Russian conditions. The struggle of the Russian Marxists against Struvism and economism was,

at that time, a struggle against Bernsteinism. But as Bebel and Kautsky became converted into centrists, among the Russian Marxists themselves people began to appear for whom Marxism was not suitable, and who, not understanding the mighty tasks which confronted the Russian revolutionaries, began to take as a basis the Marxism which had been distorted by the social-democrats of the Second International, to approach the Economists, which was now possible especially when the 1905 revolution was approaching and had put the urgent question of political struggle on the agenda. The essence of the New-Iskra position which was adopted in the period after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was to create in Russia, in spite of Marxism and in spite of the experiences of the Russian proletariat, a party like that of social-democracy in Germany which had capitulated before Bernsteinism, and not a party of revolution; a party of constitution as Yegorov had said at the Second Congress, not a party declaring war on the bourgeoisie, as Lenin had said.

The great universal historic service rendered by the Bolsheviks at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was that, having made a beginning for the party of a new type, at a moment when the best Marxist party of the Second International, the German Social-Democratic Party, in the main had turned round to centrism, the Bolsheviks created an organised support for the development of Marxism further, for Leninism; they saved Marxism.

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted a programme, which—unlike all other programmes of the Second International parties—was based on the firm foundation of Marxist theory. This programme most concisely raised the question of the road of development and collapse of capitalism, of the rôle of spontaneity and class-consciousness in the labour movement, of proletarian dictatorship as a form of State power and the weapon of the proletariat against the overthrown exploiting classes. Plekhanov, before the Congress, in his version of the programme, characterised modern capitalism, and the dissatisfaction felt by the working class for the existing status quo, as being that in the proletariat there is a spontaneous "ever-growing and rapidly spreading consciousness of the fact that social revolution is necessary to throw off the yoke."

Lenin spoke against this theory of the spontaneous growth of consciousness, for this theory glosses over the rôle of the class-conscious vanguard, the growth of the party, and the undeniable truth that revolutionary consciousness must be introduced into the movement, by the consciously acting revolutionaries and their parties.

"The spread of consciousness is put side by side with the growth of indignation and intensification of the struggle. But the growth of indignation and sharpening of the struggle makes itself felt spontaneously, and it is the party that should spread socialist consciousness" (Lenin).

In concisely raising the question of the party having to spread socialist consciousness, Lenin was in sharp contradiction with all the programmes of the Second International parties, which said that "the proletariat itself, spontaneously, arrives at the consciousness of the inevitability of winning political power" (Vienna programme), and with the whole of international opportunism. In raising the question that socialist consciousness should be spread by the conscious vanguard, by the party, Lenin laid the foundation of the mighty rôle of a truly revolutionary party in the cause of the struggle for proletarian dictatorship. It is only the party that can lead the proletariat to the consciousness of the need for winning political power and establishing its own dictatorship—and this is its mighty rôle.

But still more important is the clear decision given in the programme on the question of proletarian dictatorship, for

"the main thing in Leninism is proletarian dictatorship" (Stalin).

One of the biggest victories of Marxism-Leninism was the acceptance at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. of the programme in which, as against the programmes of all the European parties and first and foremost of the programme of German social-democracy, the question of proletarian dictatorship was raised clearly and concisely. The Erfurt programme of German social-democracy, passed in 1891, gave, on the whole, a Marxist analysis of the development of capitalist society and the inevitable victory of socialism. The Erfurt programme says that the social-revolution, which means freedom, not only for the proletariat, but for the whole of humanity, suffering in present conditions, can only be the work of the working class, leading the political struggle against capitalist exploitation; that the transition of the means of production into social property cannot take place unless the proletariat take over political power. But the Erfurt programme did not raise the question of the form this power was to take, of the inevitability of proletarian dictatorship, and thus made it possible for a parliamentary-opportunist interpretation to be given to it.

"When I began to study the draft programme, I began to look for corresponding theses in the Gotha, Erfurt, Hanfield, the

Vienna, Guesdist, Belgian, Italian, Swedish programmes, in the rules of the International. I found that on almost every point the draft differs from all other programmes" (Protocols, page 173).

This is what the Menshevik economist, Akimov, said when the programme was being discussed at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. This difference of opinion was evoked merely by the fact that all the programmes mentioned by Akimov had departed from Marxism. Bernsteinism was a further attempt to remove the objective-revolutionary sharp edge from the theoretical analysis of the process of development of productive forces.

The departure of German social-democracy from proletarian dictatorship affected Russian social-democracy in the nineties even, and first and foremost affected Plekhanov. Even in 1894 Plekhanov avoided the question of proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship in his pamphlet on the anarchists, and adapted himself to the orders of German social-democracy and the editors of 'Vorwaerts,' for whom he was writing." It was the same thing with another of his works, "Force and Violence," written also at the request of the leaders of German social-democracy and the editors of "Vorwaerts." In this, Plekhanov avoided these questions, saying subsequently that he was glad that the views expressed in this pamphlet were shared by German social-democracy, and that "he was no less glad to see that Lenin did not like them." Consequently, Plekhanov's vacillations while the programme of the R.S.D.L.P. was being drawn up were no accident. Consequently, the fact that the point about proletarian dictatorship was included, at Lenin's insistence, in the programme of the R.S.D.L.P. and passed at the Second Congress, meant a big victory for revolutionary Marxism and its advocator, Lenin, over Plekhanov's vacillations over the increasing opportunism of German social-democracy and the whole Second International. This was Lenin's great victory, which thereupon determined the whole trend of development of the party of the Russian proletariat along the revolutionary road. But Lenin and the Bolsheviks could not limit themselves to this victory, which was both political and one of principle; the more so since, at the Congress itself, the opportunists began to interpret the main theses of the doctrines of Marx and Engels to suit themselves. An organisational guarantee had to be created against the opportunist bloc of Akimov-Martynov-Martov-Trotsky, which alone could guarantee the realisation, in actual practice, of the revolutionary pro-

gramme passed by Congress, and lead the party along the revolutionary road.

The organisational principles of Bolshevism arose out of the Leninist analysis of the position in Russia, out of his reckoning upon the revolution, out of the fact that the proletariat of Russia was faced with one of the greatest of all revolutionary tasks, out of the consciousness of the fact that these tasks can be solved by the Russian proletariat only if there is present the proper ideological and political weapon and a genuine fighting organisation, capable of leading the masses. The organisational principles of the Russian Mensheviks and German social-democracy arose out of the conviction that there would be peaceful development, through the parliamentary struggle, arose out of the denial of the need for struggle for proletarian hegemony in the coming revolution for proletarian dictatorship.

The essence of the struggle at the Second Congress was the presence of two political lines, two organisational plans.

For the Bolsheviks, the party is an organiser, a driving force, the motor of revolution; for the Mensheviks, the party is the organiser of parliamentary struggle for democratic liberties, after the achievement of which there must ensue an epoch of constitutional development. In the struggle between two organisational plans, in the historic fight around paragraph one of the rules, were born two political lines, two tactics for the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, two political parties—the Bolshevik and the Menshevik.

In putting forward their organisational plan for a party on a broad scale, the Russian Mensheviks were not taking any special road of their own; they were blindly accepting the experience and decisions of the Western-European social democratic parties, the experiences of their work in peaceful conditions during the period after the Franco-Prussian war and the downfall of the Paris Commune, and they transferred these experiences into the new period of the eve of proletarian revolutions throughout Europe, to the new period of approaching revolutionary storms, and Russian conditions. The proposals made by the Mensheviks at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. were mainly a repetition of the decisions of German social-democracy in adopting the rules of the Mainz Party Congress in 1900. The first paragraph of the rules passed at the Mainz Party Congress runs as follows: "A member of the party is anyone who recognises the fundamentals of its programme and supports the party financially continuously." This Party Congress turned down all proposals directed towards increased centralisation in the party. For example, it rejected proposal No. 13, made by

party members of the Saar coalfields, to the effect that "every person wishing to be considered a party member is obliged to join the party organisation in his own constituency." It rejected, moreover, proposals Nos. 68 and 71 (Duisburg) which state that the districts are obliged to hand over their funds to the Central Committee and to receive from there in turn the necessary money for agitation. Opposing these proposals, the reporter, Auer, stated:

"The opinion has been expressed in the press that a strictly centralised form of organisation should again be introduced into the party. It has been said in the press that it is necessary to abolish the free form of organisation, which has been established for years in our party, and on the basis of which we have progressed . . . After a discussion, however, we have come to the conclusion that it is quite sufficient to maintain the framework of organisation which was established by the Halle regulations . . . We are, after all, not such an entirely free organisation without guidance and without direction."

And the fact that all proposals directed towards centralising the party organisationally were rejected is no surprise. The Mainz Party Congress took place in conditions when German social-democracy was beginning to enjoy its parliamentary successes, when opportunism was rapidly growing in the party, when the party leadership was beginning its gradual capitulation to the Bernsteinites.

The proposals of the Mensheviks were even nearer still to the formulation of the corresponding point in the rules of the Jaurès' party, and which the Bolshevik "Vpered" characterised as a fluid unification replete with the petty-bourgeoisie.

"The petty bourgeoisie, which was little capable of uniting and organising, joined the French socialist party in the capacity of its permanent and active members only to a very small extent. The latter were primarily the proletarians, who were more capable of organising. The petty-bourgeois pseudo-socialists were members of the Party only in the Martov sense of the word. Martov's members thronged to the ballot box during elections and elected Vivianes and Millerands, the diffuse and eloquent ones . . . who, thanks to their large numbers, began to play a decisive rôle. From this point of view, what is the party? It amounts to deputies, who decide the fates in parliament" ("Vpered," No. 15, 1905).

In fighting against Martov's paragraph 1 of the rules, Lenin fought against the organisational principles of the Second International and on behalf of the party of a new type. The Russian Mensheviks, who formed themselves just at this

period, repeated, merely with somewhat more of a Marxist phraseology, all the arguments of Auer and the Jaurès-ists; they wanted to create a parliamentary social-democratic party on the same lines, and like the parties of the Second International.

On the part of the Bolsheviks, this struggle meant the recognition of the mighty leading rôle of the party, and the conscious activity of revolutionaries, the organisers of the masses; on the part of the Mensheviks, it meant lowering the significance of consciousness in the proletarian struggle, subjecting it to elements of spontaneity, rejecting the struggle for proletarian hegemony in the forthcoming revolution. "The proletariat has no other weapon in the fight for power but organisation," said Lenin in one of his greatest works, "One Step Forward, Two Back," and the Bolsheviks learned this truth in the struggle for the Leninist plan. The majority of the Russian practical workers followed Lenin. The Leninist organisational plan ruled the masses. A striking document of the attitude of the practical revolutionaries to the Leninist plan is the letter of the Ufin, Middle-Ural and Perm committees sent to the Menshevik "Iskra" after the Second Congress, which branded the Menshevik, "rabochoyedelo," organisational plan.

"The preparation of the proletariat for dictatorship," it says in this letter, "is such an important organisational task that all others should be subjected to it." The preparation consists, incidentally, in creating a mood in favour of a strong, powerful organisation, in explaining all its importance . . . Here must be a combination of the highest degree of consciousness and absolute submission—one should evoke the other (recognition of necessity is freedom of will) . . . If the Paris Commune in 1871 collapsed, then the immediate cause was that different tendencies were represented therein, representatives of different absolutely opposite and contradictory interests. Each pulled in its own direction, and, as a result, there were many disputes, but little business. If the Mountain of 1793 acted energetically, determinedly, it was because it was sufficiently homogeneous. And the Mountain in 1793, although it perished, nevertheless once and for all irrevocably decided the cause of the revolution. And it should be said, not only of Russia, but of all the world proletariat, that it is essential to prepare to get strong powerful organisation. Without a strong and powerful, centralised organisation, it cannot use power for its own ends" ("Iskra," No. 63).

And in the same words as those used by Lenin abroad, Comrade Stalin, from the depths of Trans-Caucasian underground work, wrote about the

importance of consciousness and the struggle against spontaneity, wrote of the importance of a mighty and powerful revolutionary organisation, in his pamphlet, "Roughly Concerning Party Differences," written in 1905:

"The labour movement must unite with socialism, practical activities must be closely linked up with theoretical thought, and thus give to the spontaneous movement of the workers a social-democratic sense and physiognomy . . . Then the spontaneous movement, having become social-democratic, will take rapid steps along the shortest possible road and strive to win the socialist system."

Further, Comrade Stalin wrote that the calling of the revolutionary social-democrats consists in that they:

"should prevent the spontaneous movement of the workers from taking the trade-unionist road, they should lead it into the social-democratic road, should introduce socialist consciousness into the movement and unite the advanced forces of the working class into a centralised party; it is our duty, everywhere and always, to lead the movement, to fight energetically against those—be they enemies or 'friends'—who stand in the way of realising our sacred aims."

"This, in general, is the position adopted by the 'majority'" (Stalin).

"Everywhere and always to lead the movement," said Stalin in 1905 and Lenin and Stalin throughout the whole of their activities at the head of the Bolshevik party, for "the proletariat has no other weapon in the struggle for power but organisation," the proletariat has no other weapon to maintain power and win the full socialist society, but the mighty centralised organisation, the Bolshevik party, which is the foundation, which is the skeleton of proletarian dictatorship.

Of course, the Second International leaders could not "sympathise" with the fact that the Bolsheviks split off from all the old principles of social-democracy. The appearance of a party of a new type delivered a blow at all the political and organisational system, at all the political and organisational plan of the Second International. And so the leaders of the Second International (from Bebel and Kautsky to Rosa Luxembourg inclusive) from the first day of the existence of Bolshevism as a political current and as a party, took up arms against the Bolsheviks and against Lenin. But the party of Lenin and Stalin conquered and still conquers. The Bolshevik party goes from victory to victory, while social-democracy, which has degenerated into the chief social support of the bourgeoisie, is rapidly losing ground.

Bolshevism grew up on the firm basis of the theory of Marxism as the sum total of all the experiences of the international revolutionary movement. The Socialist parties of the Second International, whose ranks are swelled by the petty-bourgeoisie, and which have degenerated under its influence, at the first serious test put to them, during the imperialist war, betrayed the cause of the proletariat and disgracefully sold their swords to the Hindenburgs and Fochs; they turned into "stinking corpses" as Rosa Luxembourg said at the time. The Bolsheviks alone remained at their posts guarding proletarian internationalism, the only defenders of the revolutionary principles of Marxism, the only successors to the best traditions of the Second International. And on the firm foundations of Marxism-Leninism, the Bolsheviks created the Communist International, the international Bolshevik party, the international party of proletarian revolutions and proletarian dictatorship. And the First and Second Congresses of the Communist International, after the grand victory of the Russian proletariat in October, 1917, were convened in order to pass on the experiences of the Russian Bolsheviks to the international working-class movement. Propaganda of proletarian dictatorship in its historically established Soviet form—is this not the very basis of the foundations of the First and Second Congresses of the Communist International? And are not the twenty-one conditions of acceptance into the Communist International actually point 1 of the rules of the R.S.D.L.P. as interpreted by the Bolsheviks, only in a more developed form? And is not the main point in all the activities of the Communist International actually the creation of mighty and powerful centralised parties, capable of leading the movement of the masses in the struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the winning of proletarian dictatorship?

The party of revolution, the party that declares war on the bourgeoisie now stands face to face throughout the whole world with the party of constitution, the party of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the party which supports the bourgeoisie.

And what are the conclusions to be drawn?

Only six years ago at the Kiel Party Congress, Rudolf Hilferding said:

"Comrades! The Communists are rapidly losing ground—it is now only a question of time. I understand that the unemployed who for years have been tortured with unemployment, that those who are in desperation because they have lost all their money through inflation, that many who during the war lost faith in everything except force, perhaps still vote for

the Communists out of blind instinct. But the Communist party has no longer any meaning for the socialist movement, it has lost it . . . It is possible for social-democracy to meet with great victory. I repeat : we know the road, we know the goal. If we fight under the election slogan, true to socialist principles, unwavering towards the aim of winning State power, but free to manoeuvre in our tactics, then there is the chance that our victory will be an actuality."

Only five years have passed since Hilferding uttered these words. And the "Neuer Vorwaerts" is now forced to write : "The apparatus is dead, long live the movement," is compelled to admit that the social-democratic party organisations in Germany have been destroyed. And we, the Bolsheviks, can say that there are two reasons for this : political and organisational. The political reason is that this party, like all the Second International, has rejected Marxism, has rejected the proletarian struggle for power, has rejected proletarian dictatorship. When the bourgeoisie found itself at a deadlock, it destroyed the social-democratic party organisations, for it no longer needed the social-democratic parliamentary apparatus. When it again needs social-democratic organisations to help it fight against Bolshevism, then these organisations will once more be granted the right to a legal existence. For the party which has relinquished the struggle has morally committed suicide, and can only exist if allowed to do so by the bourgeoisie, who hold the reins of power, and then only in the form which corresponds to the rôle which the bourgeoisie gives it in the given conditions. The organisational reason for the collapse of German social-democracy lies in the fact that it long ago ceased to be a party of the proletariat, but has opened its doors wide to the petty-bourgeoisie, to government officials of the bourgeoisie; from being the representative of the interests of the oppressed and exploited proletariat, it has become the representative of the so-called labour aristocracy, of the petty-bourgeoisie and government officials, whose fate is closely and wholly linked up with the existence of capitalism.

German fascism has been unable to smash one party—the party of the fighting proletariat, the party of proletarian uprising and proletarian dictatorship, which is marching at the head of the proletarian masses, which is organising these masses for the struggle to overthrow capitalism.

There are two currents, two plans—one leads to the victory of the proletariat, the other to the victory of fascism; one has led to the creation of a mighty, strong Bolshevik party, to the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, to the victory of socialism. The other to the complete routing of the mightiest party of the Second International, to the conversion of the Russian Mensheviks into the agents and hangers-on of the bourgeoisie.

* * *

Now the new type of party which Lenin created has turned into a mighty, world force. Its organisational principles, its theory—the theory of Leninism—has been accepted by millions of the masses in the U.S.S.R. and by the Communist parties of all countries. It rules the State on one-sixth part of the earth. It is victoriously building socialism. Now it is clear to all that the proletariat can conquer, only if there is a centralised and mighty party, which can lead it to conquer State power in the form of proletarian dictatorship. Now it is clear that for the final and complete victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. one thing alone is required : to fight on further, and still better organise the masses and lead them; and for this it is necessary to fight still better to consolidate the mighty, centralised party of the proletariat, the party of Lenin and Stalin, to fight for its fighting capacity, to keep it pure and solid, to fight further to strengthen proletarian dictatorship in our country. This is all that is required for the complete victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., and on a world scale, for the building of the classless socialist society, for the complete abolition of the remains of the exploiting classes, for the abolition of the causes which generate class divisions, in the U.S.S.R. and for the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship throughout the whole world.

Attention of readers is called to the fact that copies of No. 12 containing conclusion of article of BELA KUN—"Second Collapse of the Second International" are still available.

HOW THE LEADERS OF THE I.L.P. SABOTAGE THE UNITED FRONT

WILLIAM RUST,

CERTAIN leaders of the Independent Labour Party are now attempting an open sabotage of the united front activities with the Communist Party. In Lancashire the Executive Committee of the Divisional Council has issued a circular calling upon the I.L.P. branches "to withdraw from any further collaboration with the Communist Party and to concentrate upon I.L.P. propaganda and building up I.L.P. membership." The circular goes on to state that "our branches are not able to continue the working arrangement without incurring the risk of absorption in the Communist Party or of neglecting their essential I.L.P. work." The Chairman of the Divisional Council, E. Sandham, who signs this circular, has long been known as an open opponent of the united front.

The Executive Committee of the Welsh Divisional Council is also following in Lancashire's footsteps, but it has not yet decided upon such an open flouting of the united front agreement. Instead, it proposes that no further meetings shall be held with the S. Wales District Committee of the Communist Party on the grounds that (a) a direct approach to other working class organisations is a better procedure; (b) the national agreement on the united front makes district discussions unnecessary; (c) certain I.L.P. branches are opposed to the united front and must be allowed full freedom.

The Executive Committee of the Yorkshire Division has decided that united front activities shall be limited and shall play a much smaller part in the future. The Executive Committee of the N.E. Coast Division has passed a resolution advocating that the National Council shall cease united front activities.

These were not spontaneous developments, but appear to have been the result of an organised offensive on the part of Right elements, as is shown, for example, by the action of the secretaries of the Lancashire, Scottish and N.E. Coast Divisions, who issued a joint letter to other divisions calling for the breaking off of the united front of class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

It should be noted that these Executive Committees are the small bureaux which lead the work between the full meetings of the Divisional Councils. They are the inner circle of the apparatus which clings to the old reformist policy, and which has always been opposed to the

new revolutionary ideas now stirring the members.

The inner circle of district leaders, whose eyes are firmly glued on the Labour Party, hope by these tactics to win over the Divisional Councils and to spread confusion in the ranks of the Party. But far from this move being successful there is every indication that the members will continue to fight for the policy of the united front with increasing firmness.

Ever since the united front began, in March last, the conflict between members and leaders has been steadily developing and the members have found themselves in continuous disagreement with the national as well as the district leaders.

From the very outset the National Council of the I.L.P. tried to limit the united front to the struggle against Fascism and war, and refused to accept the proposals of the Communist Party for united front against the Means Test, wage cuts, etc. But a united front against Fascism in Germany, to the exclusion of the fight against the capitalist offensive in Britain, was such an artificial limitation that the leaders of the I.L.P. found themselves hard pressed to justify this position and resorted to a number of specious excuses.

Firstly, they argued that a united front agreement between the Communist Party and the I.L.P. on all questions would prejudice the drawing in of the "wider Labour Movement," i.e., the Labour Party and trade unions. They persisted in this attitude, even after the Labour leaders had point blank rejected the united front, although not able to give an excuse for a conciliatory attitude towards the Labour Party. Of course, the real reason for this line of the I.L.P. leaders was that they did not want to advocate a united front of daily struggle, because this would have brought them into conflict with the bureaucracy, especially the trade-union bureaucracy, who are daily betraying the interests of the workers.

The I.L.P. negotiators who met the Communist Party also argued that they were empowered to discuss only the fight against Fascism and war and further powers would have to be obtained from the next meeting of the National Administrative Council. They did not explain, however, why the previous meeting of the National Council had deliberately decided not

to include the question of the fight against the capitalist offensive in their united front proposals.

The leaders of the I.L.P. were so determined to prevent the setting up of a united front on the immediate issues confronting the British workers that they even issued instructions to their branches not to go beyond the question of war and Fascism. But these instructions were not obeyed by the rank and file of the I.L.P., who saw no reason why they should not fight for the bread and butter interests of the workers, against the enemy nearest to them. The London and Lancashire Divisional Councils of the I.L.P. even went so far as to conclude agreements with the corresponding organisations of the Communist Party for the carrying out of united front activities against wage cuts, Means Test, etc.

A decision by the National Council in favour of extending the united front was not taken until the eve of the Annual Conference (April 16th). There is no indication that the National Council took this decision very willingly, but in view of the mood of the membership it was impossible for the leaders to maintain their previous attitude and face a heavy defeat at the conference. Still the I.L.P. leaders continued to drag out negotiations and it was not until May 5th, nearly three weeks after the conference, that they met the representatives of the Communist Party in order to discuss the carrying out of the decisions of the conference.

Thus, although the proposals of a united front were made in March, it took the leaders of the I.L.P. exactly two months before they would agree to any practical steps for joint struggle on the burning issues before the British workers.

There is no doubt that this attitude of the national leaders gave considerable encouragement to the saboteurs of the united front in the districts, and created the impression that they had nothing to fear by breaking off relations with the Communist Party. It is true that the National Council has sent a letter of "protest" to its Lancashire Executive Committee but, in the light of the foregoing facts the protest rings rather hollow, and has only the formal significance of a diplomatic note, reproving an act of indiscretion.

The concealed opposition of the I.L.P. leaders to the united front did not cease with the conclusion of the agreement between the I.L.P. and C.P. on the carrying out of the Conference decisions. The representative of the I.L.P. quickly found another point of difference, namely, opposition to the setting up of committees of action in the factories and trade unions. Once again the I.L.P. leaders expressed the fear that the organisation of "minority opinion" would

prejudice the drawing in of the Labour Party, and arouse the opposition of the trade union officials.

Thus the I.L.P. official policy acted as a definite brake on the *organisation* of the united front. This attitude has been a constant handicap on the development of united front activities, because the success of this struggle is dependent on the building up of real militant organisation. Without committees it is impossible to carry on persistent and sustained activity and to work out plans for drawing in wide masses. No one could expect the united front to develop spontaneously, merely because the C.P. and the I.L.P. had issued a joint communique. Only organised work in the factories, trade unions and localities could translate the masses' desire for unity into action capable of breaking through reformist sabotage and successfully resisting the capitalist offensive.

The I.L.P. leaders held to this line, even though the leaders of the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress had already started a "clean-up" of the Labour movement and in particular were expelling members who participated in united front activity. The German Relief Committee, Anti-War Committee, etc., were added to the long list of bodies which have come under the ban of the reformist leaders.

In these circumstances the holding up of the organisational strengthening of the united front was nothing but an encouragement to the Labour leaders to continue their wilful sabotage, as it prevented the rallying of the wide masses against them.

The drawing in of the "wider labour movement" (if one means by this not a handful of leaders but the millions of workers in the trade unions and Labour Party) can only be achieved by untiring work from below, and by explaining to the workers the necessity for action independent of these leaders, who are carrying out a pro-capitalist policy and sabotaging united action. This drawing in is certainly the basic task at the present moment, but it will never be achieved by the methods of the I.L.P. leaders, especially as they not only impede the organisation of the united front, but also create illusions regarding the real rôle of the Labour Party and Trade Union leaders.

By constantly harping on the necessity for bringing the official reformist leadership into the united front the I.L.P. leaders are covering up the fact that this leadership has declared its irrevocable opposition to the united front of the workers, and its adherence to the front of the capitalists. Instead of exposing this sabotage, the leaders of the I.L.P. regretfully complain

about the "small mindedness" of the bureaucracy and pathetically await a change of heart.

Thus, when the Labour Party and T.U.C. decided to ban a number of united front organisations, the "New Leader" complained, "This is the reaction of little minded officialdom . . . They can only see the little niceties of the letter of dusty resolutions and constitutions in their files" (June 2nd). In the same number the editor also asked, "How much longer are the workers going to tolerate this silly pharisee-ism? It is too narrow and stupid to argue about patiently."

This is all that the "New Leader" has to say against leaders who have even gone so far as to print the photos of Stalin and Hitler side by side, as "representatives of dictatorship," to which the Labour Party is opposed.

The Communist Party does not expect the I.L.P. leaders to carry out a consistent struggle against reformism. But the I.L.P. pursues a definite conciliatory line towards reformism in such a way as to harm the united front. Who can gainsay the fact after *all that has been said* above that although the leaders of the I.L.P. have entered into a united front agreement with the Communist Party, they simultaneously manoeuvre for a rapprochement with the Labour Party, and consequently impede the building of a united front of struggle.

From the foregoing facts it is obvious that the article by the Chairman of the I.L.P. attacking the Communist International ("New Leader," June 16th) was not an accidental outburst, but part of a general policy of kow-towing before the Labour Party bureaucrats on the part of the I.L.P. leaders. True, this article was written for the purpose of showing that it did not refer to the united front question. But this is merely a journalistic trick, albeit an entirely bad one. The Chairman of the I.L.P. cannot but know that, in declaring the Comintern to be equal to the Second International and responsible for the victory of Fascism in Germany, and repeating what the avowed enemies of the U.S.S.R. say about the policy of the Soviet Union only assisting the German and Japanese capitalists, he is breaking the united front of struggle.

We know that the last I.L.P. Congress passed a decision not only for the establishment of a united front, but also for leaving the Second International and assisting in the work of the Communist International. We know that the leaders of the I.L.P. have resisted to the utmost, although unsuccessfully, this decision in favour of collaboration with the Comintern. It called for the creation of an "all-embracing International," by which they meant the repetition of

the 1920-23 experiences, when the I.L.P. helped in the formation of a Second and a half International, which, having deceived those workers deserting Reformism with radical phrases, soon returned to the arms of the Second International.

Brockway's article is a clear example of the fact that the I.L.P. leaders still stick to the old policy, thrown out by the majority of the I.L.P. Congress, of undermining the united front movement. It is therefore not surprising that in reply to the Comintern letter on the united front and collaboration, these leaders are proposing "to call a world congress of all organisations which are prepared to co-operate on a revolutionary Socialist basis."

Will such a World Congress help or harm the *united front*? And why is it that the I.L.P. leaders, who boycotted the Paris Anti-Fascist Congress and the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress, i.e., international congresses convened on definite questions of the united front, are now proposing to call a World Congress with very indefinite and nebulous aims?

The calling of such a conference will have the effect of distracting attention from the building of the united front from below, and substituting empty talk between leaders in place of it.

With the exception of the I.L.P., all of the "left" Socialist parties participating in the calling of the Congress have rejected the united front proposals of the Communist Parties, and the I.L.P. itself does not carry out a consistent united front policy. Under such circumstances it can only be a conference of talk and phrasemongering which will help in the spreading of confusion and the preventing of action from below. The Communists have always unwaveringly fought for international united action but this cannot be conjured up by such a world congress as is proposed by the I.L.P. United action in the factories and trade unions is the only real basis for overcoming national boundaries and building up international solidarity.

The actual object of this conference is not the question of working class unity, but the setting up of a Second and a half International. Step by step the present leaders of the I.L.P. are following the same disastrous path along which MacDonald and Snowden led the I.L.P. in 1920, for the purpose of keeping members of the party who are dissatisfied with the betrayals of the reformists under their own leadership, and then leading them into the reformist camp once more. Then, as now, the I.L.P. disaffiliated from the Second International and approached the Comintern, then, as now, they proclaimed their impartial condemnation of both Internationals, then, as now, they decided in favour of a confer-

ence of "left" socialist parties to consider the "possibility of the re-establishment of one inclusive international," then, as now, the leaders of the I.L.P. rejected the proposals of the Communist International and adhered to the policy of reformism. That is to the policy of a united front with the bourgeoisie against the interests of the working class.

This policy led back to the Second International, it turned out to be a ghastly deception of the masses. The workers who were under the influence of the I.L.P. were led into supporting the Labour Party, they had to suffer the experience of two Labour Governments (both supported by the I.L.P.) which, instead of bringing the workers a step nearer Socialism, carried out the policy of the imperialist bourgeoisie in all questions, worsened the conditions of the masses, cut wages and attacked unemployment benefits. MacDonald and Snowden who had led the I.L.P. back into the Second International ended up by openly going over to the bourgeois camp and set up their "National Labour" organisation as a branch office of the Conservative Party.

The attempt to repeat this deception is a direct blow at the united front, even though the I.L.P. protest their readiness to carry out the agreement with the C.P.G.B. It is also in direct opposition to the decisions of the last annual conference of the I.L.P. which rejected the line of the leadership, and decided not only in favour of leaving the Second International, but also of assisting in the work of the Comintern.

The line of the I.L.P. leaders is leading to a sharp and unavoidable conflict with the members, especially as the members are demanding not only the united front, but also revolutionary co-operation with the Comintern. Some members have also proposed the setting up of "one united revolutionary party" and unquestionably there is a strong and growing sentiment in favour of the establishment of a united section of the Comintern in Britain.

The leaders of the I.L.P. know this very well, and frequently express their alarm that I.L.P. branches should be drawn into Communist Party activity. But what are the local organisations of the I.L.P. to do if they really want to take part in building the united front? When members of the I.L.P. and Communist Party work shoulder to shoulder in the daily class fight, the I.L.P. members on the experiences of this joint

struggle begin to clearly understand the possibility of a rapid elimination of the differences between local organisations and the need for a *united revolutionary party*, on the basis of the programme of the Comintern.

But the I.L.P. leaders warn their members against this common work, they wax eloquent about the need for maintaining the identity of "daily activity" but must be limited to particular questions and particular occasions. The leaders want the united front to be a ceremonial affair, just a pleasant Sunday afternoon, from time to time, which will in no way disturb their reformist policy and the reformist practices of the party. This opinion is not shared by the majority of the members who understand that the capitalists, who do not attack the workers just once or twice in the month, cannot be defeated by twice monthly demonstrations.

All of the frantic complaints of the I.L.P. leaders about the united front wrecking their local organisations and all the sage advice about the need for putting "essential I.L.P. work" before the carrying on of united front activities will not stop the continuous radicalisation of the members of the I.L.P.

During the last few years the Independent Labour Party has dwindled to a third of its former strength because its "left" reformist policy, its attempt to maintain an artificial middle line between the Labour Party and Communist Party, came into increasing conflict with the mood of the advanced workers, who, under the pressure of the deepening crisis, have been advancing towards the camp of revolutionary class struggle.

The I.L.P. is facing disintegration because of the bankruptcy of its policy.

The policy of reformism is the cause of the disintegration of the I.L.P., and its sectarian isolation from the international Labour movement. The development of the united front has, on the contrary, opened up a new perspective to the members of the I.L.P., it has shown them the real way to fight for "Socialism in Our Time," and the splendid possibilities which exist for the building of a *mass united revolutionary party, based on the programme of the Comintern*.

By following this road, the members of the I.L.P. will be able to play a very important part in the development of the class struggle of the British working class.

SOME QUESTIONS OF THE WORK OF THE C.P. U.S.A.

BY GREEN.

IN the United States the Party is preparing to call a convention after a break of almost three years. This convention takes on exceptional importance in the history of the Party, and therefore it is necessary to devote extremely serious attention to the questions which face the Party.

In spring this year, the Party stated that the chief decisions on the reconstruction of Party work, which were adopted over a year ago, at the XIV Plenum of the C.C., had not been fulfilled. This extremely disturbing fact was noted by the leading organs of the Party as an ordinary matter which could be solved by passing the regular resolution on the "immediate tasks" of the Party. The question arises as to whether it was necessary to call a Plenum to inform it that the resolutions had not been carried out. Can such a situation be permitted that resolutions are not carried out and then new resolutions are adopted so that, maybe, they will also not be carried out.

There was a period when such a situation existed in almost all the Parties of the Communist International. The Parties were young, the Parties had no cadres, had no experience, etc. We had to bear with such a situation, because the Parties were simply incapable of carrying out the resolutions which they themselves passed. But this period has already passed. The Parties have accumulated experience, have thrown out the Right wingers, they have certain new cadres, and finally the entire situation has radically changed. For we must remember that a new revolutionary upsurge has begun to grow. The Parties have a series of successes. More, the C.P. of U.S.A. has achieved a number of successes during the past few years. Further, the main conclusion which can be drawn with regard to the recent years in the existence of the American Communist Party is that, in those places where the Party has seriously fought for any matter, it has obtained enormous successes. Therefore, it is possible to carry out the resolutions. All the objective circumstances go to show this. The entire experience of the international movement and the American movement show that it is possible to carry out the resolutions. And if the Party sees that practically nothing has been done for a whole year to carry out the resolutions, which were prepared with such care and seriousness by the XIV Plenum of the C. I., it must be said that this cannot be blamed on to any objective causes.

Such a situation cannot be tolerated further in the Party. The resolutions are passed to be carried out. They can be carried out, and the development of the

revolutionary movement demands that they should be carried out.

On the other hand, the chief resolution of the XVI Plenum of the C.C., which took place in spring this year is distinguished by extreme optimism and suffers from lack of clarity. Firstly, on the question of the masses. The idea is brought forward in it that in all branches, after a short period of vacillation and backwardness, the Party is becoming the decisive subjective factor in the development of the mass struggle, that :

"We, (i.e., the Party) properly and rapidly react to these movements. We are able rapidly to direct these spontaneous movements along a channel determined by us."

Secondly, on the question of deviations. The idea is that at first we should conquer left sectarianism, begin to lead the masses, and only then are we faced with the task of the struggle against right opportunism. Further, it literally says the following : "It is impossible to capitulate to the reformist leaders when we are so far from the masses that we have not even any contacts with them."

Through the whole resolution runs the view that the Party is everywhere hindered by "left" sectarianism, that "left" sectarianism is the chief danger. At the end of the resolution, it is true, is a brief statement that the right danger is the chief danger, but this is a purely formal declaration which contradicts the entire resolution, because the resolution speaks everywhere of "left" sectarianism.

The statement that the Party stands at the head of the masses, that it carries the masses with it, that it can direct them along whatever channel it wishes, gives the Party an incorrect orientation.

Is this self-praise a matter of chance ? It is no chance. Such a type of statement is connected with the confused theories on the relationship between spontaneity and consciousness which are current in the U.S.A. The Party's head is turned with its first successes, and all the questions of the relations between the Party and the spontaneous movement are turned upside-down. At the XVI Plenum, Comrade X. spoke. He has an incorrect view of this question. He considers that all the successes of the Party are based on the spontaneous movement. Such a view means to bow to spontaneity. It is not a Bolshevik view.

Some comrades correctly criticised this mistake, but unfortunately they went much too far. They reversed X's. formula, and it worked out that, according to them, the spontaneous movement is nothing and the Party is everything. For example, on

on the question of the Detroit strike it was stated that: "Without the work of the Party there would never be any strikes." As if there are never spontaneous strikes, as if there are no strikes which are not led by our Party, as if a large number of recent strikes have not proved to be under the leadership of the Musteites and the A.F. of L.

Regarding the farmers' movement, some comrades said: "Without our leadership of the farmers there would not have been such a mass development of the movement among the farmers." This is pure brag.

With regard to the unemployed, there is the statement that the Party formed the unemployed movement, and, that without the Party, there would also not have been the social-fascist unemployed councils.

Of course, it is true that the Party was the initiator of the unemployed movement, but then the Party abandoned this work, and it was precisely this which made it possible for the socialists to get hold of a considerable part of the unemployed.

There is no doubt that without a revolutionary Party leading the masses, the victory of the revolution is impossible. There has not been and could not be a revolution which could conquer without a revolutionary Party. But what is a revolution? A revolution is a stupendous spontaneous upsurge of mass revolutionary initiative under the leadership of the Party. The Party cannot take the place of mass initiative nor can mass initiative take the place of the revolutionary leadership of the Party. This question must not be confused. Otherwise things are distorted in the opposite direction, and we come to the conclusion that the Party is standing at the head of the masses, when in reality this is not yet the case.

The sectarianism of the C.P. U.S.A. has been spoken of repeatedly, and not so long ago, at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was confirmed once more that which was said last year in the resolution of the C.C. C.P. U.S.A. regarding the fact that there are still many vestiges of sectarianism in the American Party.

What is sectarianism? Sectarianism is the extreme degree of a deviation, carried to the point of complete or almost complete separation from the masses. As there are two deviations, right and "left," so there can be two kinds of sectarianisms, right and "left." In this article there is no need to explain what is the right deviation. The shortest explanation of what is the right deviation is contained in the word "tailism." The right deviation is when the Party drags at the tail of the masses. And what is right sectarianism? To a great extent, it is tailism. It is breaking away from the tail. It means that the Party does not even drag at the tail of

the masses, but far behind the tail, being split away from the masses.

A historic example of right sectarianism was the situation in the C.P. U.S.A. in 1930. After this the Party, from time to time, has caught up with the tail.

What is the "left" deviation? The "left" deviation is when the vanguard rushes ahead, leaping over inevitable stages of development. The clearest historic example is from the 1917 revolution. On April 20th and 21st we had spontaneous actions by the Leningrad workers, sailors and soldiers with the demand to remove the Provisional Government. The Party considered that the time had not come to take power, that the masses were not yet prepared for this. The Party held back the masses from further action in April and on July 3rd and 4th. However, there were some groups in the Party who rushed ahead, particularly Bogdatiev, who organised a squadron of a few armoured cars and attacked along the Nevski Prospect, the main street of Leningrad. Fortunately it was possible to prevent this example spreading, otherwise this action would have played a tremendous provocation rôle. Such is an example of the "left" deviation at a moment of revolutionary upsurge.

And what is "left" sectarianism? "Left" sectarianism is a jump ahead, when the Party or group which is leaping ahead is completely separated from the masses. "Left" sectarianism is the preaching of revolutionary mass actions at a period when the masses are historically asleep. This means the isolated action of the vanguard alone, of the staff of the revolution alone, without any masses. A historic example can be taken again from Russian history. It is known that the years 1909-1910 saw the greatest decline of the revolutionary movement in Russia. The masses completely disappeared from the historic scene. There was only a small number of strikes. And precisely in these years of the greatest decline of mass activity, precisely in these years a group of Bolsheviks bearing the name of "Otzovists" continued to play about with the slogan of the armed rebellion, organised armed detachments, studied military science, in short, prepared in every way for armed action.

These items of historic information are necessary to disentangle the unclarity which exists in the C.P. U.S.A.

Of what does this unclarity consist? In the fact that they can see only one type of sectarianism, "left" sectarianism; in the fact that they regard all sectarianism as "left" sectarianism, forgetting that right sectarianism exists. Therefore it comes out as if "left" sectarianism, the "left" deviation were the chief danger.

Secondly, in what way does this unclarity on the question of deviations find expression? This is the

theory that, in order to make right mistakes, we need to be connected with the masses. This is a very big mistake. In reality, what does such a theory represent? It represents tailism inside out. From this statement it follows that in order to link up with the masses we should choose the right opportunist path, and lower ourselves to the level of the more backward masses, instead of raising them to the level of the foremost workers.

And so, where is the Party anyway? At the head or at the tail of the masses? Have the contacts between the Party and the masses deepened or grown less? The proper reply to this question is that the Party for a number of years has been dragging along somewhere far behind the tail of the movement. During the last couple of years it has more than once caught up with the tail of the movement, and more than once has even stood at the head of various mass actions. At the present time it has been proved, on the basis of the historic experience of the last two or three years that the Party is capable of putting an end completely to right sectarianism, i.e., to put an end to the split from the tail of the movement, so as to liquidate sectarianism completely. Further, as experience shows, once more, the Party can stand at the head of mass actions, but this takes place from time to time, by chance, without plan and in the manner of irregular troops. This is the chief shortcoming of the Party at the present time.

The right danger is still the chief danger in the Party, and in some respects it is even growing, but not at all because the contacts of the Party with the masses have strengthened, but because the contacts of the Party with the masses of the proletariat in recent years have weakened, while the contacts with the non-proletarian masses have strengthened and increased.

Take the basic facts for the last year. We see a weakening in the leadership of economic struggles. We see a weakening of trade union work. We see the insignificant result of concentration, i.e., penetration into the factories. We see the strengthening of the social-fascists in industrial districts. We see a fall in the circulation of the "Daily Worker," the only proletarian paper.

What do these facts show? They show the weakening of the proletarian basis of the Party, the weakening of the contacts of the Party with the workers. On the other hand, we see the not altogether successful leadership of the veterans' movement, but nevertheless some leadership of it. We see the successful organisation of a wide farmers' conference. We see the successful organisation of the anti-War Congress of the American students, who were always extremely far from any revolution, even from the point of view of European students.

Thus, we see the irregularity of the development of

the contacts of the Party with the masses. Contacts are undoubtedly increasing, sectarianism is being abolished, though it is far from having been abolished so far, but contacts with the proletarian masses are either weakening in a number of districts or are growing very slowly, while contacts with the non-proletarian masses are increasing rapidly.

The basic facts show us that the situation of the Party in the last two years has changed, and is changing very rapidly. The old danger of sectarianism has not yet been completely eliminated, but it is being eliminated. It has become less. However, we must see the changes which have taken place in the Party, the change which is taking place now. We must see that the Party is passing to a new stage, that in the Party there are arising new dangers which signify a certain increase in the right opportunist danger, but now in a new form. This is the fundamental question.

If we see this process clearly, we can clearly see the chief historic tasks which face the Party. Then we can raise the question of the plan for the further development of the Party, from the point of view of its class buttress, and correctly solve it.

Take the fundamental question in this respect—the question of concentration, the question of the penetration of the Party into the factories. The resolution speaks of it as follows: "This overwhelming weakness of the Party continues to exist in all Party life." This is put very strongly. Further, dealing specially with concentration work in the decisive sectors, it says the following: "The concentration programme is mostly operated only formally and mechanically." Again it is put very strongly.

But the experience of work in Chicago, Cleveland and Detroit, recently in particular, has shown that it is fully possible to penetrate into the big factories, if we really fight seriously for this matter.

It is undoubtedly plain from this fundamental question, the question of forming a basis for the Party in the factories, that the Party has worked very weakly. There was not sufficient clearness in the matter of the construction of the Party.

The general plan of the construction of our Party in every movement and in every complex situation is as follows: Our Party is a proletarian Party. Why? Because the proletariat constitutes the only class which is consistently revolutionary to the end. All other classes—the poor and middle farmers—vacillate, and will vacillate. Among the proletariat itself, the main section does not consist of farm workers (although of course it is necessary to work among them), but of city workers. Among the city workers, our chief basis does not consist of the unemployed, but of those who work in the factories. Our Party cannot be strong if it is a Party of the

unemployed, because our Party must base itself on the workers who are working in the factories. This is the main basis of the Party. Our basis must be the big factories in the fundamental branches of industry in the industrial districts.

In putting the question this way, we gradually arrive at the main basis of the Party, i.e., the big factories in the industrial districts. This is where the main basis of our work lies. It consists of the concentration districts, the concentration factories. Concentration is not one of the branches of Party work, along with other branches. It is the fundamental Party work for the formation of the main basis of the Party in the big factories, in the basic branches of industry.

Everything that has been said of concentration applies also to the trade unions. Any denial of this main organisational and political task is an attempt to turn the Party from its proletarian basis. The history of the Party for the last year and-a-half shows that a plan for the concentration of our forces on the main industrial basis did not exist. The Party spontaneously strives now here, now there. The veterans' movement arises and the Party strains in that direction. The unemployed movement rises, and the Party pushes in that direction. The farmers begin to move, and the Party rushes to the farmers. The students began to talk loudly and the Party rushed to the students, held meetings among them, etc. It is, so to speak, without a rudder and without sails. The Party drifts about the revolutionary ocean, now here, now there, now forwards, now backwards, now to the workers, now to the unemployed, the intellectuals, the students, the farmers, etc. Why? Because the Party has no firm plan.

What was the task of the Party towards the mass movement? Without question the Party should stand at the head of all mass actions. It must never strive to narrow down mass actions. But when taking on itself the leadership of all mass actions, including those of the farmers, the Party must firmly carry on, among this complex network of actions, the plan for building up a proletarian basis in the factories, and must always see this as its chief aim. We must go to the farmers, veterans, unemployed and students. We must everywhere take the leadership on ourselves, but we must remember that the wider the movement of the farmers and other non-proletarian circles, the more necessary it is for the Party to take the leadership of this movement on itself so as to carry out the hegemony of the proletariat, the more consistently and energetically must we carry on concentration work, the enlargement and strengthening of the proletarian basis of the Party. It is precisely the absence of the enlargement of the proletarian basis which will be the chief

obstacle for the Party in leading the entire non-proletarian movement.

We must take a critical attitude to a formal and purely external contradiction. It would seem to follow that if the Party devotes its greatest forces to concentration it will not have forces for the farmers' movement. In reality there is no such contradiction, and such a contradiction could only play a secondary rôle and could only have a temporary character. We must base ourselves on the fact that to correspond with the importance of the tasks we must distribute our forces in a planned manner so as to supply forces everywhere, but in a planned manner and proportionally to the tasks which face the Party. First of all, of course, we must supply forces for concentration. It may be objected to this, that the Party has sent its forces and nothing came of it. But if nothing came of this, it means that the people sent were not those who should be sent, it means that they did not act as they should have acted, it means that the comrades were improperly instructed as to what to do, that we gave unclear instructions on concentration to them when they set out. Thus, a planned distribution of forces *corresponding to the importance of the tasks* is the first and basic factor which must be kept in mind in the work.

Secondly, it is necessary to *select the main link* and not scatter our efforts, not fritter away our forces, not seize on tasks which the Party in any case cannot carry out. This can be explained by a few examples. We cannot organise *everything*, because if we could organise *everything*—both the farmers and all the unemployed and all the workers and the homeless and the students, etc.—we could make a revolution to-day, while we cannot even organise all the workers capable of being organised, we are not able to do this, and therefore our enemies organise some of the workers. This is inevitable, just as it is inevitable that the first lessons of political science, the first lessons of political organisation, are received by the workers from the bourgeoisie, just as the first lessons in the handling of arms are obtained by the workers from counter-revolutionary officers.

Therefore, we must clearly see that what we can do and what we cannot do. We must not take hold of tasks which we cannot carry out, we must not scatter our efforts; leave something to the bourgeoisie, let them prepare something for us.

From the question of the planned distribution of forces of the Party and the work in the concentration districts, the following most important task arises: The promotion of new forces, the renewing of the Party cadres. In this sphere matters are in a very bad state. At the Plenum it was stated:

"The leadership in the districts which took part to a greater or less extent in local struggles has not

grown up and has not arisen from these struggles, and to a great extent consists of newcomers."

Besides this the leading cadres are functionaries who have long since been separated from industry.

The question of cadres is not a technical question. It is part of the big political plan of the construction of our Party which the Party laid down as early as the XIV Plenum of the C.C.

In every Party which is struggling and growing in the struggle, Party cadres are manufactured who become the basic support of the Party. Therefore, in a revolutionary Party which is growing and developing, which is moving ahead, we can only welcome the fact that in the leading organs the same steered Party cadres who are still becoming more steered keep in their places for years, sometimes for tens of years. In Parties which have been marking time in one spot for a number of years, which suffer from insufficiency of principle and the heritage of factional struggles, which suffer from the weak development of inner-Party democracy, i.e., the failure to attract all the members of the Party into the discussion of the political questions of the everyday struggle, in Parties which are not moving ahead, the failure to change cadres, or even changes on a small scale may become a hindrance to further development. Without a policy of bringing fresh blood into the leadership and filling the cadres from among the new activists who are separated out in the current struggles, such a Party cannot turn into a genuine mass Party. Until the American workers themselves take in their hands the matter of the further development and strengthening of the Communist Party, until the Party has its fundamental basis of native American workers and is filled with native American cadres, the Party will not be able to become a real mass Party, leading the revolutionary struggles of the American proletariat and the American toiling masses. Therefore, the question of new cadres in the American Party, along with the question of concentration, is a radical question for the further development of the Party. In the preparation of cadres the Party must have its own political "Five-Year Plan" if it may be so expressed.

The best solution would be to concentrate the work for the selection of cadres on the big factories in the concentration districts. This does not mean that capable workers will not be secured from the other branches of industry, and also students, craftsmen or farmers. The basic Party cadres must nevertheless be cadres which come from the big factories. For in spite of the fact that fifteen years have elapsed since the U.S.S.R. carried out its revolution, the basic cadres of the C.P.S.U. still consist of metal workers. These are the people who created and built up the Party and led it. Therefore,

it is necessary to concentrate the forces of the C.P. U.S.A. on the concentration districts with the aim of the maximum recruiting of cadres there. There the Party must carry on a most determined policy of drawing the workers into the leadership, not being abashed by the fact that sometimes, or even in the majority of cases, they are politically untrained. Preparing them in the process of Party work, we shall be able to train them politically also.

On the question of the recruiting of new members, it should also be said that here we have also a burden of old views which hinder the Party in making a correct approach to this question. In the Party there are views explaining fluctuations by the fact that the new Party members are overloaded by all kinds of Party duties. Therefore they leave the Party. In this general form, this statement has become antiquated. It was true in respect to the period when there were no mass struggles, when in reality the kind of workers who did not want to be overloaded came into the Party. Now workers are coming into the Party who want to find a reply to a series of burning questions. In this respect what we should fear is not giving them too much work, but too little. It is ridiculous to talk about overloading Party members at a time when the Party members are thirsting to get the reply to a number of the most important questions. They do not find the reply to these questions, and therefore they leave the Party.

In this respect the Party must work out a whole series of practical questions which cannot be included in a single article.

We must attach the greatest positive importance to the successes of the Party, but these successes have no significance in themselves. In themselves they are too insignificant compared with the stupendous scale of the tasks which face the Party. All these successes are of enormous importance as a proof of the possibility of bringing about a great growth of the Party, if the Party really undertakes the work. The whole Party, all the Party members, must know exactly what is the real condition of the organisation, what are its real forces, what are the tasks set before it by history, where its main forces are directed, according to what clear and exact plan the whole Party must work from top to bottom so as to become a real mass Party, the real Bolshevik Party of the American proletariat. If this is done, if the Party becomes acquainted with the documents which the convention works out and begins to carry them out attentively and carefully, if the whole Party and all its members begin to participate actively and consciously in the planned construction of the Party, there is reason to state that it will be prepared for the mass revolutionary fights of the American proletariat, which face it in the very near future.

THE PROBLEM OF THE INCREASE IN CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT¹

By E. VARGA

MORE than half-a-century has passed since Marx with the insight of genius wrote the words :

"A development of the productive capacity which would reduce the absolute number of workers, i.e., which in fact would enable the whole nation to carry out its total production within a small space of time would cause a revolution because it would render the majority of the population superfluous." (Capital, III/I, page 246 of the German edition.)

Marx wrote these lines at a time when the capitalist method of production was as yet very remote from this stage of development—or rather decline—necessarily following from its own internal laws of growth. As yet, capitalism was moving in the upward trend. As yet, the rate of increase in the organic composition of capital was relatively slow. As yet the increase in the total mass of constant capital was still being accompanied by an increase in the variable part, the total of wages paid and the number of workers employed by industrial capital. As yet the capitalist market was enlarging itself not only in accordance with its own internal laws, but also by opening up new territory for capitalism in the colonies, and by the still continuing market-creating process of the "de-peasantisation" of the agricultural population—as Lenin says²—in the home country. As yet there were no monopolies particularly restricting the consumptive capacity of society. The process of "rendering superfluous" part of the population was affected with elementary force only in the colonies, where the agricultural home industry was defeated by the competition of capitalist mechanised industry. As early as 1834-35, the Governor-General of India wrote :³

¹ In publishing Com. Varga's article the Editorial Board invites comrades to express their viewpoint on the question dealt with.

² By "industrial capital" Marx means capital which employs workers directly creating value and surplus value, that is to say, capital used in industry, mining, transport of goods, the building trade and in agriculture on capitalist lines.

³ "Thus the transformation of the peasantry into rural proletariat creates mainly a market for means of consumption, and the transformation of the peasantry into rural bourgeoisie mainly a market for means of production. In other words : in the lower groups of the 'peasantry' labour power becomes a commodity ; in the upper groups the means of production become capital." (Lenin, "Development of Capitalism in Russia," page 128 of the German edition.)

⁴ Capital I—page 397 of the German edition.

"The misery has hardly its parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton weavers bleach the plains of India."

In the capitalist countries only an *industrial reserve army* was left, which however, in time of prosperity, was almost fully drawn again into the production process.

It was only in the post-war period, in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, that the tendency of permanently "rendering superfluous" part of the working-class became apparent ; in all capitalist countries—in particular however, in the most highly developed countries—the U.S.A., Germany and England—a *permanent army of unemployed* was formed instead of the industrial reserve army. This permanent army of unemployed was no longer, even in prosperity, completely drawn into the production process. Now this permanent army of unemployed—subject to the influence of the industrial cycle—shows a definite tendency towards increasing.

Worse still : in these most highly developed countries a tendency shows itself in the post-war period towards a decrease in the number of those employed by industrial capital, i.e., of the workers creating value and surplus value—a real definite "rendering superfluous" of productive workers.⁴ By way of illustration we herewith quote the figures of the wage workers employed in the industry of the United States according to official census figures :

Year.	Average number of wage workers ⁴ in thousands.		Index of Industrial Production. ⁷
1919	..	9,000	84
1921	..	6,947	67
1923	..	8,778	101
1925	..	8,384	105
1927	..	8,350	106
1929	..	8,839	119
1931	..	6,512 ⁵	80

⁵ We stress emphatically : it is not by any means a matter of a decrease in the number of the proletariat, but only in that section which *actually holds a job* in industry, mining, agriculture, or the building trade in the most highly developed capitalist countries ! Parallel with the decrease in the number of productive workers, there is an increase in the number of workers employed in business, banks, advertising, personal services, etc., as a result of the degeneration of capitalism as well as a much higher rate of increase in the number of totally and partly unemployed.

⁶ Statistical abstract, 1932, page 7, 130.

⁷ Federal Reserve Board.

⁸ Monthly Labour Review, Feb., 1933, page 308.

It appears that eight million workers in 1929 produced about 30 per cent. more than nine million workers in 1919. The capacity of the market, however, did not suffice for this production of a number of workers, which, in comparison with 1919, had decreased. Huge stocks of unsold goods accumulated, and the deepest and sharpest crisis in the history of capitalism broke out.

The developments during the present economic crisis—about which we shall speak later on—clearly shows that never more will so many productive workers find jobs in the U.S.A. as in 1919 (with the exception, perhaps, of the next world war). The basic reason of this new phenomenon characteristic of the period of the general crisis of capitalism lies in the following :

For the capitalist class as a whole, for the utilisation of the total capital of society it would be *most favourable to employ all workers to the full*, since, in this case—all other conditions being the same, the mass of surplus value appropriated by the capitalists is largest. But competition compels all capitalist enterprises (even in the period of monopolist capitalism) to concentrate on the largest possible reduction in the cost of production in general and in wage costs, in particular. Therefore, the organic composition of the capital is raised, i.e., labour productivity is increased through technical progress, increased intensivity of labour, permanent squeezing out of workers, the aim of each single capitalist to reduce the number of workers employed as much as possible. This internal contradiction is inherent in capitalism. However, up to the war, the squeezing out of workers through the improvement in the organic composition of capital was more than compensated on a social scale through the accumulation of new industrial capital. This is no longer the case in the period of the general crisis. *It is true that the process of capital accumulation continues*—albeit at a reduced rate—new factories are built, new machines are installed; but the absolute increase in *V*, variable capital, through accumulation, is no longer large enough to compensate the decrease in *V* through the increase in the organic composition of the capital already operating. The more so, since the expansion of the capitalist markets no longer suffices to utilise the whole of the productive capital available. There are no longer any new countries to be opened up. In the most advanced capitalist countries the process of “de-peasantisation” is almost completely finished. On one-sixth of the globe the capitalist system has already been smashed. This results in the chronic standstill of large sections of the productive apparatus : “excess of capital with an excess of population,” as Marx says.

We now show, on the basis of concrete figures, how,

during the present world economic crisis, the tendency to permanent exclusion of workers became effective to an increased extent. We wish to stress that this does not concern the squeezing-out of workers as a *result of the crisis*, i.e., in accordance with the decrease in production, but that it is a question of the same quantity of goods being produced at present by a much smaller number of workers than before the crisis.

We adopt as basis the statistics most suitable to this purpose, namely, those of the United States.

In the United States the process of the excluding of workers during the crisis has operated at a break-neck, unprecedented rate. The following are the figures of the Federal Reserve Board :⁹

	Production of the Manufacturing Industries.	No. of workers employed.	Total wages.
May, 1932	60	61.3	46.2
May, 1933	80	60	42

Consequently a production increased by fully 33 per cent. was produced by 2 per cent. less workers¹⁰ and these workers received a 10 per cent. less total wage.

Such, according to official figures, is the picture of the developments during the last year.

It will not be superfluous to examine the relative or absolute exclusion of workers in the various branches of industry.

INDEX FIGURES OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION AND THE DEGREE OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.A.

	1923-25 being 100.					
	Production		Number of		Total wages	
	Index	May	Employed	May	paid out	May
	1933	1932	1933	1932	1933	1932
Iron and Steel	49	29	52.5	56.5	29.5	30.4
Textiles	106	59	73.4	62.4	46.8	41.5
Foodstuffs	101	89	82.6	83.2	64.8	72.9
Paper and Printing	85	90	79.9	84.3	64.9	77.0
Building Timber	30	28	35.7	39.0	18.0	22.2
Motor-cars	51	45	43.8	54.7	40.4	53.5
Leather	109	84	79.7	75.8	50.8	45.7
Tobacco	143	110	65.4	68.4	45.5	48.4

The specially great change to the detriment of the workers is particularly great in the iron and steel

⁹ These statistics are established on the basis of figures supplied by the larger factories of every branch of industry each month regarding the quantity (not the total value) of goods manufactured, the number of workers included in the wage list in the course of the month (whether for twenty-five days or for half-a-day) and the total wages paid out in the course of the month. These statistics embrace three millions of workers and therefore can be considered authoritative for the whole industry.

¹⁰ As these statistics do not disclose how many hours in the month every worker has worked, it is possible—and this is even probable—that every worker has worked longer on an average in May this year than in May last year. But, in any case, so much is certain : that the total wages paid out has decreased.

industry where an 8 per cent. less number of workers as against a 3 per cent. reduced total wage, produced 70 per cent. more than a year ago. In the motor-car industry the number of employed fell by fully 20 per cent., the total of wages paid out decreased by 32 per cent.; at the same time the workers produced 15 per cent. more motor-cars in May, 1933, than a year ago. In the textile industry the number of employed increased by 14 per cent., the total of wages paid out by 11 per cent., the production however, by 44 per cent.

These figures show very clearly how sudden was the exclusion of workers, and the increase in the degree of exploitation during last year in the U.S.A.¹¹

THE PECULIARITY OF RATIONALISATION IN THE CRISIS IS THAT IT INCREASES UNEMPLOYMENT.

This enormous increase in labour output in American industry is due only to a very small extent to the increase in labour productivity, i.e., technical progress during the crisis. It is a well-known fact that the production of the elements of fixed capital, i.e., machinery, tools, iron and steel, hardly covered the natural, current wear and tear during the crisis at all.

On the other hand, the process of rationalisation also continued at an undiminished rate during the crisis. An essential change has taken place, however, in its character, the capitalists having adapted themselves to the very restricted utilisation of production capacity, and to mass unemployment as a permanent condition.

The aim of rationalisation is, of course, an increase in profits. The individual capitalist enterprises, unaware of the whole complex of relations in the capitalist method of production, and acting upon the laws of competition, endeavour to increase their share of the total profit by increasing the disparity between cost price and selling price. Since the crisis does not permit an increase in the selling prices, but on the contrary, has led to such a heavy drop in prices that the profits of the majority of capitalist enterprises have been flooded away, the capitalists threw their whole force during the crisis into the reduction of cost prices in general, and labour cost in particular.

There is, however, an important difference between the previous methods of reducing cost price through rationalisation in the period of prosperity, and the present method adapted to the drawn-out crisis. Five or six years ago the task set by the

capitalists to their scientists, technicians, organisers and overlookers was approximately the following :

"Reduce the cost price per produced unit for me. If this is only possible by increasing the quantity of goods produced, don't worry. The sale is my business. For a good product at a low price it is always possible to find a market."

The crisis has taught the capitalists that, in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, very narrow limits are set to the expansion of the capitalist market. The crisis has taught the capitalists that in many cases, in the completely rationalised enterprises, adapted to mass sales, where the whole production runs on the automatic conveyor, the cost price, as a result of restricted production, has risen much more than in less modern enterprises. Therefore the capitalists, during the crisis, set their scientists, technicians, organisers and overlookers approximately the following task :

Reduce the cost price per produced unit for me, on condition, however, that this does not involve an increase in the quantity of goods produced, because there is no possibility of increasing sales. Or still more concretely : obtain a lower cost price notwithstanding the present limited outlet for the capacity of our enterprises.

Scientists, technicians, organisers and overlookers have complied with the command of the capitalists. Notwithstanding the very limited utilisation of production capacity, cost price was drastically cut. On reading the business reports of the big industrial enterprises, we quite generally find the following remark : Cost price has been drastically adapted to the present low prices ; a small increase in sales will make our business profitable again.

The main methods applied to this purpose seem to be the following :

Within the monopoly organisations concentration of production in the best enterprises (laying up the less efficient ones sometimes, as in the case of Ford) with, on the other hand, a greater utilisation of the small rural industrial plants which work with particularly cheap labour. Within one single factory either utilisation of the most up-to-date machines while laying up the more old-fashioned and less-efficient ones, or inversely, abandonment of the production on the chain system, for the more primitive methods better adapted to small sales. Picking from the point of view of the capitalists, of the "best" workers ; of workers who accept with least resistance the speeding up of work, while the tremendous mass unemployment has made it possible to "comb out" the big enterprises of recalcitrant elements ; of the revolutionary class-conscious workers.

Intensification of labour *with a simultaneous heavy reduction in wages.* The employment of the majority

¹¹ The statistical returns for Germany, England and Italy can only be established in a similar form by means of very complicated conversions and combinations. We must therefore dispense with these in the scope of this article. We have no doubt, however, that the line of development is the same in all highly developed capitalist countries.

of the workers on part-time in various forms¹⁴ enables the capitalists to increase speeding-up to a maximum during actual working hours. If this murderous tempo leads to a rapid premature using up of the workers, the capitalists need not worry about finding substitutes: the army of the millions of unemployed always supplies new material for exploitation. The disintegration of the labour process into single absolutely simple operations, the intense mechanisation of the labour process, reduces the number of skilled workers whom it is difficult to substitute, transforms the bulk of the workers into easily replaced unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

In this way monopoly capital, through new forms of rationalisation, has succeeded in considerably increasing the production per worker during the crisis, in throwing the burden of the crisis to a large extent on the proletariat.

The peculiarity of rationalisation during the crisis is that it accelerates the creation of the permanent army of unemployed existing in the period of the general crisis owing to the general laws of capitalism, accentuating at the same time the tendency towards decreasing the number of workers productively employed by industrial capital. The 30 per cent. increase in industrial production in the U.S.A., notwithstanding a reduced number of workers, clearly shows what rationalisation means to the proletariat in the crisis. This result of "crisis rationalisation" precludes any doubt that even if the U.S.A. could find a capitalist way out of the crisis, even if the volume of industrial production could again reach the level of 1929, would the number of employed in American industry ever again reach the level of 1919; *an army of several millions of workers has been definitely excluded, and as long as the capitalist method of production exists they will never again be drawn into the production process.* And what has been established for the United States by figures, applies—albeit to a smaller extent—to all capitalist countries. The words of Marx that capital cannot ensure the lives of its slaves within the framework of its own wage-slavery have now been realised to a letter. *Chronic mass unemployment will have a decisive influence on the lot of the proletariat as long as the capitalist method of production exists in any country.*

The continuously increasing mass unemployment—barring changes within the cycle—leads to a series

of essential processes within the working-class. To an ever-larger degree the working-class is splitting into two camps: that of the employed and that of the unemployed, as a result of which there is, of course, a marked fluctuation of individual workers between the two camps. At the same time, however, we witness the tendency towards the creation of a firm nucleus both in the camp of the unemployed and in the camp of the employed. The capitalists are striving to comb the revolutionary vanguard out of their enterprises, to render the active Communists permanently unemployed. On the other hand, created side by side with the capitalists, and partly instead of the labour aristocracy, which as a result of the general and the present periodical crisis decreases in number and character, is a higher strata, a new strata of privileged workers. It is those strata of the working-class which, corrupted in a new way, betray their class comrades and lower themselves to act as tools of the capitalists. They are not corrupted by higher wages, but by the relative certainty of their employment. They are corrupted also by the hope of being the last ones to lose their job in the enterprise; corrupted on the basis of ever-threatening unemployment. They are members of the company union, of the yellow trade unions, the fascist factory committees and the technical emergency organisations, i.e., professional strike breakers, company spies, denunciators, scoundrels. . . . *The cleavage between the situation of the unemployed and that of the employed*—notwithstanding the attack of the capitalists, while the crisis rationalisation also worsens the conditions of the latter—becomes ever greater in direct proportion as unemployment benefit, in those countries where it exists, is suppressed, and to the extent that unemployment continues.

This, in rough outline, is the position in which at present (and generally during the further existence of the capitalist method of production), the capitalists and the proletariat confront each other. It is doubtlessly more favourable for the capitalists as purchasers of the commodity, labour power. The masses of the millions of embittered unemployed who have nothing to lose in the world constitute however a serious social danger to the rule of the bourgeoisie. As the unemployed partly flow back from the towns into the villages to their rural relatives, they increase the embitterment of the peasantry suffering from the chronic agrarian crisis, on the support of which peasantry the bourgeoisie must rely in the struggle against the proletarian revolution. Favourable as mass unemployment may be for the capitalists from the point of view of price of labour power and the possibility of the increase of exploitation, it involves great political dangers.

Thus we see, in almost every country, manœuvres by the bourgeoisie dictated by their fright of the

¹⁴ In the American coal, iron, steel and automobile industries, etc., each worker works only two to three days per week even if the plant itself works full time. The working time of the enterprise and the working time of the workers employed do not coincide. The enterprise "employs" double the amount of workers there are jobs for, the majority of the workers working only every other day. In many branches of industry in the U.S.A. this was already the case even during the period of prosperity.

unemployed; compulsory reduction of the weekly working hours in the U.S.A. (by which, as a matter of fact, only the existing conditions are approved), public works in nearly all countries, "voluntary" labour service and incorporation of part of the unemployed in storm troops in Germany, etc. All these, however, are little household remedies which cannot alter anything in the basic evil, for never will the capitalists again be able to create work for the mass army of unemployed. Only by the destruction

of millions in the next world war can the bourgeoisie hope to solve the problems of mass unemployment.

Led correctly by the Communist Parties, co-ordinating the struggle of the unemployed and employed workers, and bridging the cleavage between unemployed and employed in the revolutionary struggle, the permanent army of unemployed will doubtless be one of the most important factors in the struggle for power.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE LEADERSHIP OF STRIKES

(From the experiences of the Polish Communist Party)

By I. ARONSKY.

THE Communist Party of Poland, which is organising resistance of the working class to the capitalist offensive by developing the strike struggle, and raising these isolated struggles to the level of militant action on the part of large detachments of the working class on a wide front, and of general strikes in whole branches of big industry, has accumulated considerable experience in the sphere of the tactics and strategy of independent leadership of the strike movement. Taking as examples the analysis of the concrete measures and organisational activities of the revolutionary party and trade union active fighters in the sphere of independent leadership of big strikes which have taken place in Poland, we are making an effort to show the positive and negative sides of this work in the past, for the purpose of laying down the tasks for the present.

Let us take the first strike of tramwaymen in Warsaw, which took place in May, 1931. The party organisations and trade union left (revolutionary trade union opposition), during this strike, capably arrived at the creation of an independent strike leadership, in opposition to the reformist trade unions, and with the help of which the fascist, social-fascist and christian leaders were completely isolated from the striking masses.

It was the Communists who stood out as the organisers of the protest against, and resistance to, every attack on the standard of living of the tramwaymen. By organising mass meetings, committee-meetings, demonstrations of protest in reply to each measure on the part of the directors to rationalise or to lower the rates of wages, the revolutionary trade union opposition was able to mobilise the masses and to lead them right up to the general strike. The strike began in the tramway workshops and rapidly spread to the depots

and the lines. At a mass meeting organised by the revolutionary trade union opposition, at which several thousand tramwaymen were present, a strike committee was organised consisting of Communists, Polish Socialist Party, and non-party workers. The masses, including reformist workers, hurled themselves down upon the platform and drove the trade union bureaucrats, who were in open opposition to the strike, from the meeting. The strike committee became the exclusive leader of the striking masses. Under its leadership the tramwaymen carried on a stubborn fight against the blacklegs for three whole days. At all the meetings arranged by the trade union bureaucrats, the trade union Left got the upper hand. The entire mass of strikers — six thousand tramwaymen — maintained complete confidence in their own militant organ—the strike committee.

The appeal of the reformist trade unions to the tramwaymen and their declaration to the effect that the strike was called off, met with no response whatever among the strikers. The fight continued with even more stubbornness. Only the extraordinary terror let loose by the fascist apparatus (the arrest of the strike committee, the closing down of the revolutionary trade union of tramwaymen, etc.), and mass blacklegging under the defence of the police, was able to smash the struggle.

The tramwaymen, who had so heroically fought, could have held out longer had the Warsaw party organisation and the revolutionary trade union opposition done everything necessary, at the right time, to extend the front of struggle and the general strike in Warsaw. There was every possibility of doing this, if only the strike committee, which was extremely popular, had had

additional organised support in the form of individual strike committees or delegates in the tram depots and workshops. Had this been so, then it would have been possible to guarantee closer *organisational* connections with the masses, which would have made it possible to offer stronger resistance to the blacklegs. Finally, if there had been more timely care taken concerning the preparations for a reserve strike committee, the mass of strikers would not have been deprived of leadership when the strike committee was arrested. These are the defects and weaknesses manifested by the revolutionary trade union opposition during this strike. But the main thing that was achieved was the complete isolation and removal from the movement, and the leadership, of the reformist leaders as unmasked strike breakers, and the completely independent leadership of the strike by the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, through the strike committee, created on the broad basis of the united front.

It should be mentioned, however, that the Warsaw Communist Party organisation and the revolutionary trade union fighters did not sufficiently learn from the experiences of this struggle, did not bear in mind first and foremost the definite changes which had taken place in the strike-breaking tactics of social-fascism. Social-fascism, which had been fully unmasked, and isolated during the first strike, made use of quite different tactics during the second tramwaymen's strike which very rapidly followed, in November, 1931, and tried to veil its strike-breaking from the masses. Seeing that the second strike was inevitable, social-fascism did its very utmost to avoid being isolated from the movement, and tried to get the leadership by hanging on to the strike movement, so that it might betray it and crush the struggle. In these circumstances, the question of unmasking social-fascism and showing up its new tactics, became a big political task.

It would have been possible to solve this task successfully only with the help of even more stubborn mass organisational work, by spreading the work in the tram depots and strengthening the positions there, and by organising opposition in the reformist tramwaymen's unions. In this political and organisational work lies the main question of the creation of an organ of united front of struggle—a *central strike committee*, which alone would have been in a position to smash the new tactics of the social-fascists, by confronting the fascist and social-fascist leaders and their trade union apparatus with the organ of mass struggle elected by the masses themselves. The fulfilment of this task demanded that the active party members should exercise even more

energy for the reason that during and after the first strike of the tramwaymen heavy repressions were resorted to (the revolutionary union of tramwaymen was closed down, there were mass dismissals, etc.), which could for the time being frighten away the weaker elements among the tramwaymen. But the most important thing, which had to be considered, was the repressions which burst upon the members of the strike committee. The arrest of the revolutionary leadership could not but evoke among the active elements among the tramwaymen a tendency of a legalist character, a desire in future to avoid repressions, to hide their independent line, and to use the legal leadership of the reformist trade unions during the strike, as a shield for their own activities.

What was the essence of the new tactic of the reformist leaders? The tramwaymen want to strike, we, social-fascists, are prepared even to lead the struggle for them. But why have illegal strike committees of Communists, who are persecuted and arrested by the police, when we have our own legal trade union to lead us in the struggle? This was the sort of agitation conducted by the social-fascists.

A position of this kind demanded a flexible and skilful approach to the question of the creation of independent leadership. Quite apart from several measures taken to swing the tramwaymen into movement, and concrete political assistance for them for the purpose of overcoming any waverings that might arise and the tendency to legalism and illusions about the reformist leaders, a special approach was necessary on organisational questions. It was important, while organising separate detachments of tramwaymen for the new strike, to build up organisationally, leading organs in order that in each tram depot and workshop there should be local strike committees organised which would unite together to form a central strike committee at all big meetings or conferences. Or, having elected the central strike committee at a mass meeting of tramwaymen, as was the case during the first strike, support should have been got from the separate strike committees in the tram depots and workshops. The complex nature of the situation was not sufficiently taken into consideration by the Warsaw party organisation and the trade union Left. As a result, at the meeting which was called on the eve of the strike, the trade union left of the tramwaymen made the suggestion to elect not a central strike committee as the united leader of the strike, but a central control commission. It goes without saying that this step on the part of the trade union left was a reflection of the indefinite illusions which had not yet been overcome by the active fighters

among the tramwaymen concerning the reformists and, first and foremost, legalism, and the desire to hide from repressions behind the backs of the legal reformist trade union, to whom the formal leadership was given. This step made it easy for the reformists to manoeuvre. Although, on the part of the active Party members and the trade union left, great efforts were made to give the control commission the maximum functions of a leading organ of the strike committee, although in the main the actual leadership of the strike was realised by this control commission, nevertheless, with the existing tactics of the reformist trade unions—of not getting divorced from the movement and not revealing its clearly strike-breaking policy—the latter were able to make use of the weak trade union left for the purpose of sowing illusions among the masses about joint leadership of the strike with the Communists, to increase the impression that the reformist trade unions were leading the strike, and that not just formally. And the most important thing was that the trade union left, by leaving a definite field of action for the reformist manoeuvres, was unable fully to isolate the reformist leaders and their trade unions from the striking masses, which only helped them to betray and crush the heroic struggle of the Warsaw tramwaymen

II.

Considerable experience has been gained, from the viewpoint of the question which interests us here, from the big strike struggle of 40 thousand Dombrov miners in March, 1932, and therefore it would be expedient to dwell in detail on this strike.

What were the tactics of the reformists in the Dombrov basin? They did their utmost to weaken and split the front of struggle and not to allow the miners of Upper Silesia and the Dombrov Basin to solidly take simultaneous action. The reformists stopped every strike that was organised by the trade union Left in separate pits by openly coming out as blacklegs. But when the reformists saw that, in spite of their strike-breaking tactics, the strike struggle continued to spread, and that the miners' will to strike was growing stronger, and that, at last, the trade union Left had managed to bring several of the leading pits into the strike, and a strike of the miners in the whole basin was inevitable, then the reformists gave up their open strike-breaking tactics and pretended to be supporters of the strike action, putting forward their own trade union as the legal leadership of the strike as against the illegal strike committee. More than this, to raise the authority of their com-

promised trade union, the reformists took the line of setting up as strike leaders their own loyal Polish Socialist Party delegates in the pits; and all the measures taken to weaken and stop the strike they put through with the help of their own trade union with the participation of these delegates. But the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition carried out considerable work of preparation: the strike went forward under their political influence, and in spite of all the efforts of the reformists to hold back the movement and keep it within the framework of fascist legality, the Communist Party of Poland managed to endow the strike with the character of an acute struggle (mass street demonstrations, grim fights between strikers and the police for the street, etc.).

However, in the organisational sense the Dombrov organisation, the Polish Communist Party and the trade union Left did not fully overcome the weaknesses and deficiencies. Wherein was this reflected? It was reflected, in the main, in the fact that the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition did not know how to fight stubbornly for the creation of organs of independent leadership as the only leadership recognised by the entire mass of striking miners. Although seven strike committees in seven pits, created and led by the revolutionary trade union opposition, and also the central strike committee, during the whole of the strike, manifested considerable activity both organisationally and politically, and influenced the development of the struggle, nevertheless, they were not able completely to smash the manoeuvres of the social-fascists, or to isolate them entirely from the mass of strikers. The Polish Communist Party in its estimate of the achievements and weaknesses connected with the Dombrov party organisation and the trade union Left in the miners' strike, laid on record:

"The Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition organisationally lead a considerable part of the mass of miners on strike, by fighting through the whole course of the strike for the removal from strike leadership of the Polish Socialist Party leaders, who relied on the legal trade union supported by the police, and the delegate apparatus. But the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition did not manage to create a wide network of strike committees in the mines, and also a strike committee connected with the masses, a leadership which would have decidedly influenced the movement of the strike, by removing the Polish Socialist Party leaders from the leadership of the strike in general, and by isolating these leaders from the masses."

What are the causes of these weaknesses? The cause, first of all, lies in the fact that the illusions about the Polish Socialist Party, and especially in connection with their pit delegates, whom the reformist trade union used very widely to create the impression that the steps taken by the reformist trade union were with the agreement of representatives from among the working masses—were still not overcome. In consequence of this we were organisationally weak. The condition which would have successfully isolated the social-fascists would have been to confront the reformist trade union with an organisational network of strike committees elected on the basis of the united front in the largest pits, headed by a central strike committee, together with representatives from the pits' strike committees, which would have been a true expression of the will of the striking masses, closely connected with the masses and leading them. The seven pit strike committees which existed were elected on a basis which insufficiently represented the masses in the pit, and which left a sufficiently wide field of activity for the reformist trade union, which was acting through its own delegates in the pits. The weakness which arose in this way made it impossible to set to rights the central strike committee, which was created by the revolutionary trade union opposition by, as it were, a "short cut," which was not elected by the main mass of strikers, and which did not therefore enjoy authority among all the miners on strike. Thus the revolutionary trade union opposition organs of leadership, although they played a very big rôle and were able to extend the strike to several pits, nevertheless three or four days later, after the struggle had been brought to an end by the reformists, found themselves unable to fully remove the reformists and isolate them from the striking miners. The experiences of this big strike and the criticism of its weak sides, especially the weakness connected with the problem of independent leadership, were explained to the party rank and file, and played a big part in the work of getting organisational questions of the creation of united front organs of struggle for leading strikes brought to the forefront among party and trade union active fighters.

III.

As the strike wave rose higher and the resistance of the toiling masses organised by the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition increased through the use of the tactics of a united front from below, the idea of united front organs of struggle penetrated deeper and deeper into the minds of the masses.

Committees of action and strike committees are becoming more and more popular, and not a single one of the bigger strikes in Poland takes place without the creation of militant organs to lead the struggle of the masses. The flood tide of the strike movement during the second half of the year 1932, and especially during the first few months of 1933, and the enormous activity manifested by the chief detachments of the working class, have compelled its social-fascists to make use of more deceitful manoeuvres to avoid being completely isolated from the masses. The social-fascists have had to change their attitude to the strike committees. What do these tactics of the reformists amount to? They continue to do all they can, and spare no expense in this connection, to prevent a struggle breaking out. Wherever a struggle of the workers breaks out in separate factories and mines, whether spontaneously, or at the initiative and under the guidance of the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, the reformists try to prevent these fights, calling them "wild" (outside) action and manifestations of "adventurism" among the workers. When the struggle, in spite of the reformists, nevertheless continues, they try to tack themselves on to the movement, to seize the leadership, and through all kinds of intrigues and negotiations behind the scenes with the owners, to crush the struggle, and afterwards they frequently try to make out that these negotiations with the owners and treacherous arbitration constitute a victory for the workers and a service rendered by the reformists themselves.

But the main thing that is new in the tactics of the social-fascists at the present stage are the new manoeuvres as regards the strike committees. The reformists do their utmost to prevent the creation of strike committees, by making them out to be the result of the splitting work of the Communists and frightening the workers concerning the illegal strike committee by police repressions. However, being convinced that the workers do not trust them and their trade unions but determinedly support the strike committee led by the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, the reformists rapidly adapt themselves to the moods of the workers; they, as it were, agree to the formation of a strike committee and do their utmost to seize control of it for the purpose of keeping the movement in their own hands, of fighting against its spreading and assuming a political colour, and keeping it within the framework of social-fascist legality to betray it, at the first opportunity.

As an illustration of the new element in the tactics of the social-fascists, let us take two

examples from recent big strikes in Poland, which offer enormous positive experiences by clearly demonstrating how, if the mass-organisational work of the Communist Party is arranged properly, the Communist Party from the depths of its illegal position can launch and successfully lead the mass movement of large detachments of the working class. These strikes at the same time make it possible to take into consideration also the negative sides and weaknesses in our work, especially in the work of the organs of independent leadership. We have in view the strike of the textile workers in Lodz and Belostok which involved the whole of the textile proletariat of Poland (120,000 all told) and which, after a long stubborn fight (Lodz for four weeks and Belostok for three months), ended in the complete victory of the strikers.

It was clear to the reformists in Lodz, on the eve of the strike, that, despite all their long strike-breaking work, it would not be possible to keep back the mass resistance organised by the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, with which the Lodz textile workers had replied to the constant attacks of capital. The reformists saw that a fight on the part of the textile workers, with its broadest front on behalf of the new collective agreement and 1928 rates of pay, thanks to the mobilisation which had resulted in consequence of many months of stubborn work on the part of the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, was absolutely inevitable. The reformists, moreover, bore in mind also that their trade union, in which not all the masses of textile workers were organised, would be unable to stand out against a strike committee as such, that the textile workers were determinedly fighting for the organisation of their own militant leading organ—a strike committee—and they realised that to ignore all this would be tantamount to complete isolation from the movement for the reformists. Having regard to all this, the reformists adopted the following tactic: to send their loyal supporters and trade union workers into the strike committee, to make it subordinate to the reformist trade union, in whose name the leaders would act inside the strike committee, and so convert the strike committee into an appendage of their trade union by using the confidence felt by the striking masses towards the organ they had created themselves.

On the whole, this tactic of the social-fascists was understood in time by the Lodz party organisation and the trade union Left, and they jointly reacted to it. It early became clear to the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, that the reformists' tactics being

such, it was necessary to guarantee that they keep the leadership of the strike committee, in order to fight successfully against the strikebreaking tactics of the reformists, and to isolate them from the movement. It was necessary to create strong leadership in the works and to get a broad base in the form of a network of strike committees elected by the masses in the factory on the basis of the united front. By March 5, when at the mass conference of delegates of the textile factories (1,300 delegates) against the will of the reformist bureaucrats, the trade union Left was able to declare a general strike of textile workers in Lodz and environs, through the efforts of the revolutionary trade union opposition, fifteen strike committees were formed in the biggest factories in Lodz. These strike committees were elected at factory meetings, where, on the basis of the united front, both Left and non-party workers were put on the strike committee. Similar organs of the united front were formed in the majority of factories in Lodz, and played a decisive part in the leadership of the strike. They carried on a mass struggle against the black-legs. Under the leadership of the strike committee, special factory delegations and pickets organised mass demonstrations of strikers during the early days of the strike outside the factories which had not yet joined in the struggle, thus helping the workers of these factories to overcome their vacillations and join in the struggle. These strike committees, under the guidance of the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, were the chief initiators and organisers of the grandiose street demonstrations which, with the participation of tens of thousands of workers, waged a grim struggle against the fascist State apparatus and won the streets for the strikers. The strike committees in the factories realised the actual leadership of this great struggle of the textile workers. However, as the Polish Communist Party records, the task of completely isolating the reformist leaders from the leadership, and the movement, was not fully realised.

What are the chief reasons for this? Without doubt the political mistakes and weaknesses to be found in the active elements in the Lodz textile workers' movement played their part, as well as the illusions still held, to the effect that the reformist bureaucrats, having been elected by the masses into the leading organs, and being under the control of the central strike committee and the factory strike committees, would be unable to do any strike-breaking.

These illusions, connected with a certain underestimation of the political moment, the extent of the struggle, and the capacity of the masses to

organise resistance to fascist repression, led the trade union Left into making a big mistake of an organisational character with regard to the central strike committee. This mistake made it difficult to achieve complete isolation of the reformist leaders.

The point is that the revolutionary trade opposition missed the moment of the decisive struggle, when it should have removed from the reformist bureaucrats all possibility of manoeuvring inside the central strike committee. How could this have been achieved? At the delegate conference, where, despite the trade union leaders, the masses decided to elect a strike committee; at that time the revolutionary trade union opposition should have manifested the maximum organisational initiative in adopting the tactics of the united front. In putting forward a list of left workers, non-party workers, and members of the reformist trade unions for the central strike committee, it should have relied on the network of factory strike committees for direct contact with the factory masses, and thus, from top to bottom, have guaranteed for itself independent leadership with the help of united organs of struggle which were openly opposed to the reformist leaders and their trade unions. The revolutionary trade union opposition did not show this initiative; it proposed no ready-made list for the central strike committee at the delegate conference, and the reformists made use of this, and seeing that the question of the formation of the strike committee had been decided by the masses in spite of them, they came forward with their own list of candidates, cunningly making it appear to be "democratic" and "above all parties." The reformists did not include the leaders who had long ago been discredited, but left them a field of action in the central strike committee where they could operate through the trade union board; but they included in the list all the trade union leaders of lesser calibre, from the Polish socialist party, from among non-party workers, and even from among the left workers of the revolutionary trade union opposition. True, systematic efforts were made by a group of delegates from the trade union Left in the central strike committee, which in many cases on fundamental questions of leadership and forms of struggle (extending the front of struggle, making the strike a political one) were crowned with success, while the majority of the central strike committee voted for the proposal of the trade union Left, and offered resistance to the frequent strike-breaking efforts of the reformists. Nevertheless, the organisational work of linking up the central strike committee with the network of factory strike committees, by co-opting representatives of the latter on to the central strike

committee to reinforce the positions of the trade union Left, was insufficient. The revolutionary trade union opposition was not able fully to foresee and render harmless all the intrigues of the trade union bureaucrats or to bring in their train finally all the wavering non-party delegates, or, at the moment when there were obvious attempts on the part of the reformist leaders to break the strike, to throw them out of the central strike committee.

Mass demonstrations played a big part. Under the guidance of the revolutionary trade union opposition, demonstrations were arranged near to the place where the central strike committee was sitting. The delegations of factory strike committees, which came with demands and suggestions to the central strike committee, had an enormous influence on the central strike committee. The actual leadership of the strike by the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition was manifested most clearly at the time when the reformist leaders, against the decision of the central strike committee, proposed by the trade union Left, proceeded to Warsaw for negotiations. It was there that they signed the agreement to go to arbitration and liquidate the strike, and, on their return, forced the strike to be called off in the central strike committee. A stormy demonstration of strikers, ten thousand strong, organised by the revolutionary trade union opposition near to the hall where the delegate conference was taking place, the determined position taken up by the trade union Left, which won an absolute majority of the central strike committee, and most important of all, the systematic work and actual leadership which the factory strike committees gave to the masses of workers on strike, with whom they kept in close touch, resulted in strong resistance being offered to the reformists. The fight continued several days longer, and finished with the complete victory of the textile workers. Nevertheless, as has already been said, the revolutionary trade union opposition was not able fully to remove the reformists from leadership, and right up to the last minute the reformists were able to keep certain possibilities of manoeuvring for themselves and were partly able to hide their strike-breaking attitude from the masses, and to sow, especially among those strata of the workers who had been drawn into the struggle for the first time, the illusion that the Polish Socialist Party is also out for struggle, is also in favour of united front organisations of struggle—in favour of strike committees.

The position of the Lodz party organisation and the trade union Left considerably strengthened during and after the strike. Several new factory

cells and groups of the trade union Left, the majority of the delegates who had been elected by the masses for the first time in the Lodz textile factories, formed a majority for the trade union Left. However, the mistakes and discrepancies which took place during the strike dictate the need for strengthening the struggle against social-fascism, reinforcing and extending the positions in large factories. Side by side with the formation of a revolutionary union of textile workers, it is essential to strengthen the work of the revolutionary trade union opposition in the reformist trade union, of which considerable sections of those textile workers who took part in the strike are still members. The Lodz organisation of the Communist Party should analyse questions of the united front and organisational questions connected with the independent leadership of strike struggles.

IV.

Let us take the experiences of the strike of the Belostok textile workers. A stubborn fight of two thousand workers went on for three months, accompanied by three general strikes of solidarity, stormy demonstrations, severe fights with the police, and finishing with a victory for the strikers. It should be mentioned that the Belostok party organisation and the trade union Left had to exert themselves considerably to help the working masses to overcome the big vacillations which were apparent in connection with the difficulties, the persecution and the hard material position they found themselves in. On the whole the party organisation, which was somewhat weak, managed the task and led the movement up to a strike.

It is characteristic that, to launch this strike stubborn work had to be done to get the workers to come out of the factories. This was done by means of mass demonstrations of strikers at the gates of those factories which were still working. Thanks to the concrete assistance given, one factory after another joined the struggle. The Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition gained the leadership of this strike, thanks to the adoption of correct tactics of united front in forming the strike committee. After preparatory work had been done, on the initiative of the revolutionary trade union opposition, a general meeting of textile workers was convened at which the strike committee was elected. But the revolutionary trade union opposition correctly realised that the strike committee, in the election of which only 400 textile workers took part, could not win the confidence of all the textile workers unless it took the line of expanding its number and bringing in representatives from

the other factories. By adopting the united front tactic, the revolutionary trade union opposition was able to get the election of a strike committee in the Christian-democratic trade union, which entered into the composition of the central strike committee. Thanks to the stubborn work of the revolutionary trade union opposition inside the reformist trade unions and mass meetings at the big factories where delegates were elected to strike committees, the central strike committee became the only organ of struggle of the whole mass of striking textile workers. The revolutionary trade union opposition guaranteed to itself the majority in the strike committee and thus both politically and organisationally got the actual leadership of the strike.

What were the tactics of the social-fascists, and how far was the trade union Left able to isolate them from the movement and the leadership? In Belostok, as in Lodz, the tactics of the reformists amounted to trying to prevent a struggle. When the strike became inevitable, the reformists began to manoeuvre. They, so to speak, were in favour of the strike, but the leadership must be in the hands of the board of their own legal union. Seeing that in spite of them, the strike committee was being formed through the efforts of the Communists and the revolutionary trade union opposition, the reformists, forced to reconcile themselves to this fact, directed their main efforts to reducing the strike committee's functions to the rôle of an auxiliary organ of their own trade union, and then to use this body, which was so popular among the strikers, for the purpose of preventing the struggle from extending further and becoming more intense, and for stopping the strike at the first opportunity. The revolutionary trade union opposition, on the whole, offered strong resistance to these attempts. A stubborn fight went on for three months. However, there were several manifestations of weakness and vacillations on the part of the trade union Left which made complete isolation of the social-fascist leaders from the reformist trade union, who were hanging on to the leadership, very difficult. An essential factor for most successfully unmasking and completely removing the Polish Socialist Party trade union leaders from the movement was a strong network of strike committees in separate factories, at least in some of the largest. These strike committees, connected with the central strike committee, and serving it as a basis for direct organisational connections and the leadership of the factory masses would be in a position to smother the embryo of the social-fascist manoeuvres and to unmask their strike-breaking activities before the masses on strike. This task was not fulfilled by the Belostok party

organisation and the trade union Left, and consequently a definite field was laid open for the activities of the trade union bureaucrats and their manœuvres with the alleged support of the strike of the textile workers. The Belostok organisation has before it considerable and stubborn work in connection with winning and reinforcing the positions in the textile factories; the organisation must increase the struggle for winning over the social-democratic workers in the reformist textile workers' union; it must take into account the weaknesses in the organisational and mass work and on the question of independent leadership of battles, reckoning all the time with the concrete tactics and manœuvres of the social-fascists.

V.

The experiences which we have given here of the work of the Polish Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition in the sphere of independent leadership of strike struggles do not exhaust the question, but we think that even this information makes it possible to work out all the complex sides of the tasks which confront party organisations and the trade union Left in this sphere.

What do all these experiences point to? First of all, they prove that an important question cannot be approached on the basis only of general estimations, and schematically arranged methods and means. Mass organisational work in the period of preparations for a strike should be concretely adapted to the existing conditions at the given moment, and to the given section of the workers. The party organisation should see and reckon with the vacillations and difficulties which, as a result of the hard material position, the need and the unemployment, the police terror and activities of social-fascism, arise among the working masses. There must be no leaping over these difficulties and vacillations, there must be no running away from the working masses on the pretext that "they are opportunistically inclined," they do not want to fight, etc. On the contrary, the masses must be helped to the utmost to overcome these feelings, and get free from the influence of social-fascist leaders. It is necessary, in this case, that there should be systematic, active work on the part of the factory and workshop committees, the trade union Left factory workshop groups, and the opposition inside the reformist trade unions; there must be permanent contact with the mass and an understanding of its difficulties; there must be constant action on the part of the Communists, as the initiators, the organisers and leaders of the struggle in defence of the daily interests of the workers. There must be constant efforts made

for the purpose of realising the united front tactics in the daily work in the factories. The factory workshop committees and factory delegates should play a special part in this work. Communists as factory delegates, and Communists in the factory committees have every opportunity, together with the groups of the trade union Left and under the leadership of the factory cells, to come forward as organisers of the united front of all workers inside the given factory, as the only defenders of the interests of the whole mass of workers in the factory. As for the technical process of forming united front organs of struggle—committees of action during the period of getting the masses into motion and preparing for action, strike committees during the period when the time for the strike is ripe—it would be extremely harmful for the movement if a mechanical approach were resorted to with a ready prepared scheme for all times.

One thing must be made clear once and for all: no strike committee whatsoever, which is created in the quickest and easiest manner, and in an artificial way, will be in a position to play the rôle it has been set. Truly militant organs should be created as a result of stubborn, systematic, organisational and mass work inside the factories, as a result of skilful and concrete adoption of the united front tactics, the establishment of the closest ties between Communists and the factory masses. It is also clear that Communists must each time concretely reckon with the new features, new manœuvres and measures adopted and embodied in the tactics of the social-fascists towards each detachment of workers of the given factory and branch separately, to be successful in helping the working masses to understand the deceptive slogans and shouting of the social-fascists in time, so that when the Communists unmask the manœuvres of the reformists, it will be understood by all. It is without doubt, moreover, that in launching battles of large detachments of the workers of whole branches, the Communists should strive to ensure that the factory masses drawn into the movement actively take part in the creation of united front organs of struggle as expressions of their will for revolutionary unity in the struggle. In order to successfully resist the various intrigues of the social-fascists as regards strike committees, and get them completely isolated from the leadership, the Communists must not and cannot limit their work to creating a central strike committee, or only strike committees in individual factories. Both the first and the second, if they are not linked up with the closest collaboration, will fail to ensure the complete breakdown of social-fascist tactical manœuvres, which they use to make the strike

committees work in their own interests. Only the Communists' activity and maintenance of the leading rôle in organs of struggle from the top to the bottom, and with a central strike committee with a mighty foundation in the factories and in the form of local strike committees in the factories, will guarantee to the Communists complete and independent leadership in the struggle, and will make it possible to completely remove the social-fascist leaders from leadership.

The Communists must strongly resist all attempts on the part of the trade union bureaucrats to lessen and compromise the united front organs of struggle by subordinating the strike committees to their own trade unions and by the activities of reformist leaders on the arena of the strike committee; they must resist all attempts on the part of the trade union bureaucrats to contract the foundation of the strike committee, to prevent it from extending by bringing in representatives of factories and lower strike committees, to convene meetings and conferences of the central strike committee behind closed doors,

to deprive the strike committees of the opportunity of passing political decisions and making the fight political in general. The Communists must fight to ensure that the strike committees will have the right and opportunity of being the only actual organ of struggle of the united front, under the political and organisational guidance of the Communists.

On the basis of the experiences of preceding fights, and after analysing the positive sides and mercilessly criticising its own mistakes and weaknesses, the Polish Communist Party is indicating the way to solve this important task. Concrete mass organisational work, the concrete solution of the organisational tasks, a skilful approach to the non-party and social-democratic workers, gives the Communist Party an opportunity of still further strengthening and extending its independent, leading rôle in maturing struggles, of hastening on its victory in winning over the social-democratic workers and the actual realisation of revolutionary unity among the working class of Poland in the fight against fascist dictatorship.

THE GROWTH OF IMPERIALIST ARMAMENTS

By S. DASHINSKY.

(Continued from No. 15)

Simultaneous with this, much work is being done in the building of aerodromes and aviation bases in Kharbin, Tsitsikar, Ninguta and many other parts of Northern Manchuria, most of these bases will cater for 40 to 50 planes, the Kharbin base is being built for 300. On the Sungaree river a river fleet has been established. Along the Sungaree and the Chinese Eastern Railway a line of forts is being built. Finally, we see the close relations established between the Japanese military and the Japanese counsellors in the Manchukuo Government with the Russian White Guards, and White Mongolian emigrants, bandits and other anti-Soviet elements, as well as the provocation work of the Japanese on the Chinese Eastern Railway. All this, put together, leaves no doubt as to the presence in the Far East of a source of danger of immediate war against the U.S.S.R.

The British diehards are attempting, as they have already done in 1926-27, to come forward in the rôle of organisers of the anti-Soviet front. Despite important economic and political disagreement with Japan (in particular around Anglo-Japanese competition in Eastern markets) the British diehards have supported Japanese aggression in Eastern Asia. By this they hope to develop war against the Soviet Union. Besides, the British themselves are pre-

paring a *place d'arme* for anti-Soviet war in the Baltic countries and especially in the Middle East—Iraq, India, Persia and Afghanistan. Great attention is being paid by the British to the development of aerial forces, and of a mechanised Anglo-Indian army to operate against the Soviet oil and cotton districts. Rehearsals of such operations have been conducted in Great Britain for several years, and are at present being intensified.

On June 16th, the U.S.A. Secretary of the Navy, Swanson, declared that, in addition to the naval budget sanctioned by Congress, 238 million dollars have been assigned for the construction of new battleships. On June 19th the United States Government assigned nine million dollars from its "public works fund" for the construction of 290 hydroplanes over and above the programme of the navy department. On July 1st, the U.S. Government made known its supplementary programme of naval construction according to which 32 new battleships and four naval bases are to be built.

These steps taken by the United States call forth retaliatory measures of its competitors, particularly Great Britain and Japan. For example, in answer to the announcement of the United States Navy Department of February 12th, to the effect that the

American Atlantic fleet will remain in the Pacific until July, 1934. Japan announced five days later, that besides the naval manoeuvres to be held in the neighbourhood of the Mariana and Caroline mandate islands, the Japanese navy would carry out additional manoeuvres. On June 17th, 1933, i.e., the day after the American Secretary of the Navy announced the new expenditure for naval armaments, the Japanese papers stated that the War Ministry intends to demand for 1934 an additional assignment of 250 million yen and that Japanese experts are carefully studying the American naval programme and are preparing certain proposals regarding an increase in Japanese naval armaments.

No less sharp is the competition in preparing for new imperialist wars in Europe, around the problem of revision of the Versailles system. At the present time the relation of forces between the German and French navy is such that the French fleet is six to eight times stronger than that of Germany. But, German fascism is straining all its forces in order to minimise this disproportion. In Germany a programme of so-called bringing armaments up to treaty limits, is being operated by direct action. The numerous exposures of the world Press reveal that the numerical strength of the German Reichwehr has at least been doubled. These exposures also reveal that the number of members of the Hitler detachments has reached 700,000 to 800,000 which gives Germany a total armed force of 1,500,000 men. One can also judge as to the actual state of affairs in Germany by the fact that heavy artillery, tanks and military aeroplanes, banned by the Versailles Treaty,

are being introduced in the German armed forces. At the present time the co-relation of armed forces has undoubtedly changed, particularly along the Eastern borders of Germany, where apart from a general increase in armaments, extensive work in the erection of fortifications in Eastern Prussia along the Oder river and a substantial increase in the frontier guard is taking place. However, all of these measures of bringing armaments up to the treaty limit are far from giving Germany a decisive superiority over France, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Belgium. It is not surprising that in this situation the German National-Socialist Government is striving to win time for still further arming itself, at the same time trying to avoid the danger of a preventative war on the part of France and Poland. It is not surprising that the German Fascist Government is trying to fulfil its programme of a new division of Europe by means of a big war, its programme of re-establishing the might of German imperialism, primarily under the slogan of anti-Soviet attacks and of conquest of Eastern European territory.

Finally, around the Balkan, Danube and Mediterranean knots of imperialist contradictions, there is taking place military preparation on the part of Italy, Jugo-Slavia, Rumania and other Governments.

The proletariat of the entire world must carefully watch all of these feverish preparations of the imperialists for a new and even more bloody war. The proletariat must fight unitedly against the oncoming danger of new imperialist wars, both in the West and in the East.

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